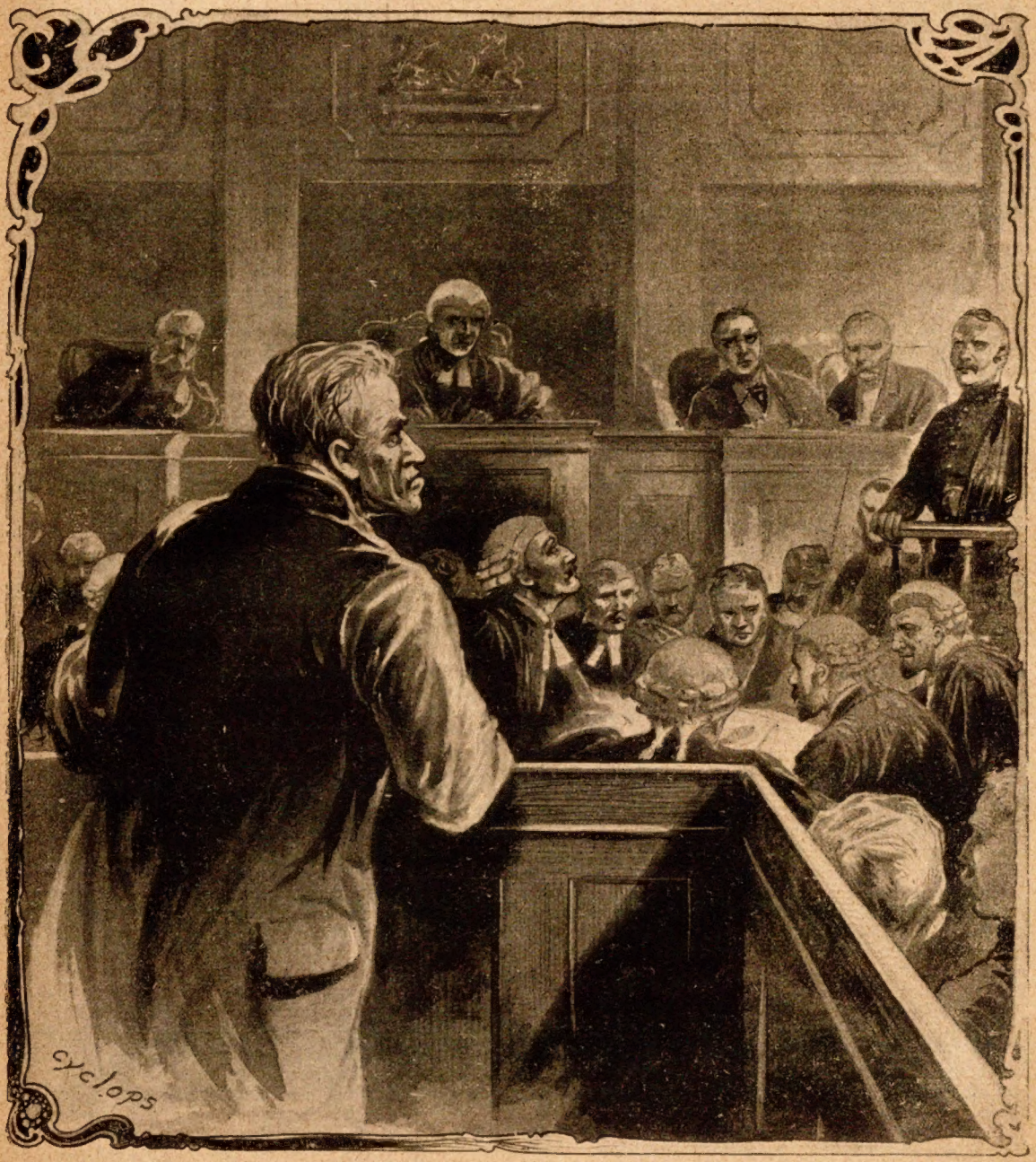
POLICE · BUDGET · EDITION

EDITED · BY HAROLD FURNISS

FAMOUS CRIMES

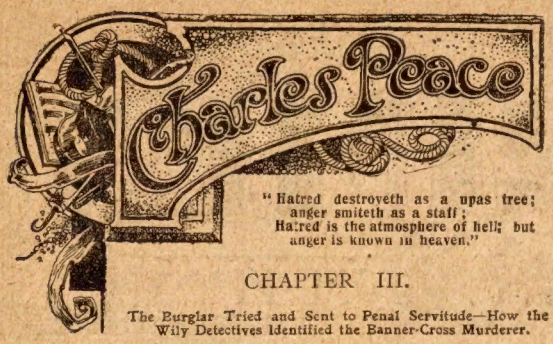
PAST AND PRESENT

ONE · PENNY



CHARLES PEACE TRIED BEFORE JUSTICE HAWKINS.

Vol. 1.—No. 3



"Hatred destroyeth as a upas tree; anger smiteth as a staff; Hatred is the atmosphere of hell; but anger is known in heaven."

CHAPTER III.

The Burglar Tried and Sent to Penal Servitude—How the Wily Detectives Identified the Banner-Cross Murderer.

WHEN Peace reached the police-station he was, of course, charged in the usual way with shooting at a constable with intent to kill, and with burglary. He refused his name and address, and all the blandishments of the inspector on duty could not extract a word from him. At the time of his arrest he was stained a dark brown with walnut juice, so the officer took him for a mulatto, and described him as such on the charge-sheet. Later investigations showed that the criminal was in the habit of buying up all the walnut husks that he could, saying that he wanted to make a hair restorer out of them. More than this, what little hair he had was dyed, and the boys of the neighbourhood used to notice that it changed colour at times.

Peace once under lock and key, Inspector Bonney, in charge of the Blackheath station, went round to Mr. Burness's house, and found the marks of the prisoner's jemmy, which instrument had been taken from the burglar when he was captured. In the drawing-room were discovered several bundles of silver plate ready to be carried away, and one or two drawers in a davenport in the library or study had been forced open. It was only the purpose of the prosecution to prove that Peace was a burglar, and they did not look for more.

A fortnight was occupied in making inquiries as to his name, for he religiously refused all information himself. Then Inspector Bonney stumbled on the fact that "an elderly, respectable gentleman" of Peckham had been missing for that exact period, and he thought that it would be as well that he should see if anybody could identify his prisoner as this "respectable gentleman."

The milkman, whom we have already mentioned as a neighbour at Evelina Road, was brought to Blackheath, and at once picked out Peace from the group of persons in the station-yard, declaring him to be Mr. Thompson, the name under which Peace had been passing.

That done, an order was made for a search of the house in Evelina Road, and there the Inspector found a bundle of pawn tickets—more than thirty in number—which referred to goods missed from many houses in the neighbourhood. Application at the pawnbrokers showed that Peace had sent one of his two women to deposit the goods, under the name of Thompson.

In due course Peace was brought up at the Greenwich Police-court, and charged before Mr. Flowers with burglary and shooting. He was spoken of as a mulatto and a sailor, though why the latter profession was ascribed to him is a mystery to this day. Having found by previous experience that hypocrisy pays when you have to deal with magistrates, Peace was most Godly in his language, and whenever he was associated with other prisoners set to work to "convert" them. In this he thought he was clever, but the warders who have the supervision of the accused persons look with suspicion on the "too good" prisoner, and they sent off to the various gaols for the attendance of some of the principal warders, in order that their fresh charge might be identified, if possible.

Proof of Peace's burglarious offence being so clear, Mr. Flowers committed him for trial at the Central Criminal Court, and he was transferred to Newgate. There he gave the name of "John Ward," but the police by that time had heard of him as Thompson, though he did not know that.

While awaiting trial Peace was interviewed by a number of detective officers and prison officials, but they all failed to recognise him. For all that, his life must have been one of terror, seeing that he momentarily feared detection, and though he was sure that the crime he had committed, and been caught at, meant a term of penal servitude, he knew full well that the discovery of his real name meant certain death at the hands of the common hangman.

At first Peace was too proud, or too luxurious, to partake of the prison fare, and had his meals sent in from a neighbouring restaurant, but soon he realised that all the money he possessed would be required to conduct his defence, and, having sampled the food provided by law for prisoners awaiting trial, he decided that it was sufficiently appetising for him, and elected to be supported at the expense of the State.

As soon as he was settled down in his new quarters, Peace made application for paper and writing materials, and these were not denied him, for a prisoner committed for trial is allowed to have anything which will not facilitate his escape from custody or aid him in taking his own life. Then he set to work to draw up an outline of the defence which he proposed his counsel should offer on his behalf.

This was not the first time that our hero (?) had been inside a prison, but he knew that if he showed the slightest sign of being acquainted with the routine of the place he would be "spotted" as an old gaol-bird, and more people would come to identify him, so he sent for the warder of his corridor at every opportunity, bungled over cleaning his cell, loudly protesting that he had never done menial work before, asked questions innumerable, and generally behaved as a newcomer would.

For the time being this conduct deceived the warders of Newgate, who thought that they had a genuine first offender among them.

Now, daily in all the prisons where suspected offenders are detained pending the declaration of their guilt or innocence, a certain ceremony takes place which is much dreaded by the old "lag." This is the exercise in the prison-yard. The prisoners walk round in a circle several yards apart, and during this monotonous promenade several people in plain clothes come in and scrutinise the committed ones. The strangers are detectives, and any attempt to avoid their glance at once marks a man as a criminal, who, though he may not be identified by any present, is being sought for by others from different parts of the country. The police system is closely interwoven, and there is seldom any difficulty in finding a detective who can claim the man he is in search of.

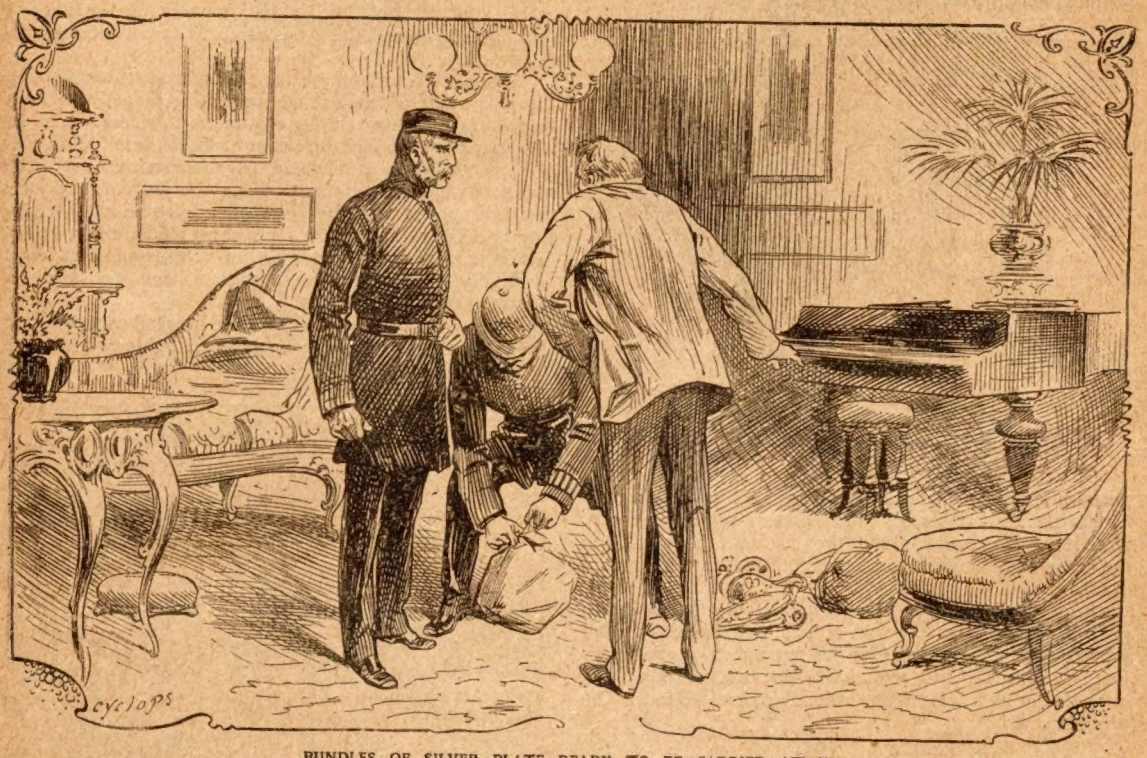
While performing this daily march Peace tried not to show that he had the least idea of who the gentlemen visitors were, but on one occasion he must have betrayed himself, for one of the detectives remarked to the Governor that he was certain that Peace was an old convict. Fresh efforts were therefore made to find out whether he had ever been in gaol before or not.

Visiting day came round, and the women-folk of the Evelina Road establishment came to see Peace. Fearing the worst, Peace made certain arrangements with them relative to the disposal of his property. Then through them he arranged for a solicitor to be employed to draw up the brief for his defence. This was done, and the prisoner occupied much of his time in writing letters to his lawyer, or having interviews with him. But this was not all that he did.

In a former chapter we have mentioned the invention which Peace had made for raising sunken vessels. In the exploitation of this discovery he was associated for some time with a Mr. Brion, a civil engineer. When the models were completed, these two called on the Lords of the Admiralty, and asked to be allowed to see one of the principal officials. They were told to write particulars of the object of their visit and an interview would be granted. A day or two later the Sea Lords received a letter from Peace,

who called himself Thompson, and Mr. Brion, saying that they had made the most remarkable discovery of modern times. As a proof that their apparatus would effectively raise sunken ships at a less cost than the existing methods of salvage, they proposed that the contract for raising the "Eurydice," which had lately foundered, should be entrusted to them, and they further suggested that they should raise the "Vanguard," which had sunk some little time before.

With the usual disregard which British Government Departments have for any but the foreign inventor, Peace and Brion were informed that the Admiralty was equal to recovering the vessels which its own sailors had lost, and the assistance of an outsider was not wanted. This angered Peace, who was a very hot-tempered little man, and he forthwith approached the German Ambassador, with a view to securing the contract for salving the "Grosser Kurfurst." Here again he met with a repulse, for the Germans were just



BUNDLES OF SILVER PLATE READY TO BE CARRIED AWAY.

at that moment engaged in improving an almost similar method for themselves, and were sufficiently patriotic to prefer the discoveries of their own people to those of aliens. This being so, Brion determined to attempt to find a private buyer for the patent.

He thought he had done so, and went one day to Peace's house to obtain a part of one of the models for submission to a possible purchaser, who was willing to give £500 for the sole rights. Peace was not at home, so, as the matter was pressing, Brion took the desired part and showed it to his customer.

Whether it was that "Mr. Thompson" was vexed at anyone having to do with his inventions while he was absent, or that he feared that if Brion had too ready access to the house he might stumble on the real method by which the "independent gentleman" derived his income, is not known, but he flew into a violent rage, and swore that he would shoot Brion. He even went the length of inviting him to come round, and told his wife that he intended to "do for Brion." Mrs. "Ward" was averse to deeds of violence, and warned Brion not to come. From that day the pair were parted.

The astonishment of Mr. Brion can therefore be imagined when he received the following letter, written on the stamped offical paper supplied to prisoners in Newgate:

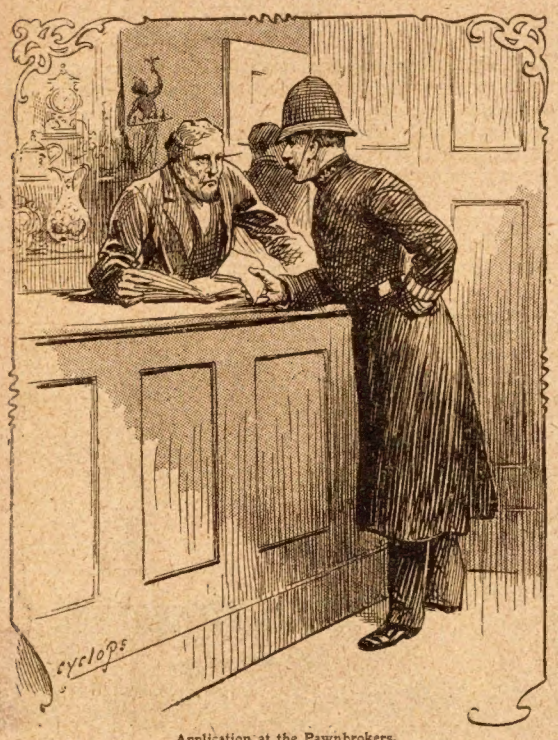
"From John Ward, I.D. (his cell number), for trial,
"H.M. Prison, Newgate,
"Nov. 2, 1878.

"My Dear Sir,—Mr. Brion,—I do not know how to write to you or what to say to you, for my heart is near broken, for I am nearly mad to think that I have got into this fearful mess, all with giving myself up to drinking; but, O, Mr. Brion, do you have pity on me, do not you despise me as my hone famery has don, for I do not know ware they are, for they have broken up there home and gon I do not know where. So O, my dear Sir, I must beg of you to have mercy on me and come to see me. O, do not say nay, for I now that when you do see me and know what I am here for you will weep for me; but I cannot tell you till I can see you, for I have something that I want you to do for me, that is for you to try and find out for me, for I do not know whare they are gone to. Give my love to Mrss brion and to little fredey, but dissps me now that I am in prison and for meary sakke write a letter back to me direct at once, to give hease to my trobel hart. I finish with my love to you all.—I am yours recherde, "John Ward.

"But do have mercy upon me and come to see me. You can see me heney week-day from one till two o'clock, and enquire for John Ward for trial."

At first Brion was unable to make out from whom this curious epistle came, and communicated with the police, when he was informed that his correspondent was none other than the "respectable Mr. Thompson." A little taken aback, Brion determined to visit his erstwhile partner, and presented himself at the door of Newgate on November 2, for Peace had dated his letter a day or two in advance. There he had an interview with the accused, who coolly asked him to come to the court and give him a character, as he had only shot the policeman because he was in want

of money; he was also asked to call on a publican with whom Peace had had some dealings, and beg him to be present at the Old Bailey when the case was called. The last request Mr. Brion promptly promised to grant, and then the



Application at the Pawnbrokers.

prisoner commenced to whine and pray as if he was penitent for his offence and anxious to make every reparation for it. Here it may be mentioned that the statement that drink was the cause of his misdeeds is incorrect. Peace never was a drunkard.

Brion received many other letters from Charles Peace prior to the trial, but they are of little real interest beyond proving without doubt that he was not a man of education. One, though, is a little remarkable, inasmuch as the statement that drink had been his downfall is repeated in it. The prisoner says:

"I know that you are full of trouble for me been such a nod fool to give way to drink and bring myself into this most fearful affarer; but do forgive me for writing to you and have Pity upon me; and do all you can for me, a moust wretched and miserbel man, that is not fiet to live nor dei, for I am not fiet to meet my God and I am not fiet to live now but I have disgraced myself. But O do have Pity on me and do all you can for me, and I will Pray to God to re Pay you for it agane."

This little extract serves to emphasise the remarks we made above. Peace was illiterate and was a thorough hypocrite.

While the "hero" was waiting in Newgate for his trial what had happened at his home? When the morning came and it was found that the master of the house had not returned, Mrs. Thompson got anxious, and went round to see a friend, Mrs. Long, for sympathy. She advertised in the papers, but no answer was received, and at last she made up her mind that she had lost her "Charley." But after a short period of suspense she returned home from a visit to her friend and found that Mrs. Ward, or the real Mrs. Peace, had vanished, and with her had disappeared several heavy boxes which she knew were filled with valuables.

Not wishing that her paramour's property should be pillaged, she took the precaution of seizing the remaining goods and despatching them to a secret hiding-place of her own. Then the news of her lover's whereabouts reached her, and she went to stay with Mrs. Long for a few days, telling her that her husband had been suddenly called to America. After this she vanished temporarily, and was not heard of by the Longs for some time.

Days wore on, and at last November 19 arrived, the day on which the "Blackheath burglar" was to be tried. A considerable amount of interest was taken in the case, and the Old Bailey contained as many of the general public as could gain admittance into its limited gallery.

Mr. Poland, who died a few years ago, a distinguished barrister, conducted the case for the Crown, having with him Mr. Douglas Straight. For the prisoner, appeared Mr. Montague Williams, who has also passed over to the great majority, and with him was associated Mr. Austin Metcalfe, who afterwards became a judge. The junior bar was well represented, for both the leading counsel were masters of their profession, and there was much to attract the students of advocacy.

Almost all Courts of Justice are built on the same plan. There is a raised bench for the presiding judge, with extra seats for the élite whom he may invite to sit with him, or who may have the right to occupy places there. The well of the court-room is devoted to the barristers and the solicitors who instruct them. Near the judge is the jury-box, and opposite it is the witness-box, whence truth or perjury is delivered. A dock faces the judicial chair, and a certain amount of space is given up to the public at large. Invariably court-rooms are ill-ventilated and the arrangements are most inconvenient.

Peace was put into the dock. He glanced eagerly round the court, and the first person his eyes lighted on was the

"This might mean seven years!"

Constable Robinson at whom he had shot. He was fully aware that all eyes were looking at him, and he immediately tried to assume a modest air, as if he really had made a mistake which anyone could have made, but for which he was sorry.

CHARLES PEACE

FROM THE ONLY EXISTING PHOTOGRAPH OF THE MALEFACTOR IN THE POSSESSION OF THE POLICE.

Then he lifted his eyes to the Bench, and there he saw one whose name, even in those early days, was a terror to the burglar or the garotter. Arrayed in all the majesty of his scarlet robes sat Mr. Justice Hawkins, now Lord Brampton, the first criminal jurist in England. The accused felt his heart sink for an instant, for he knew what it meant to be sentenced by "Hawkins."

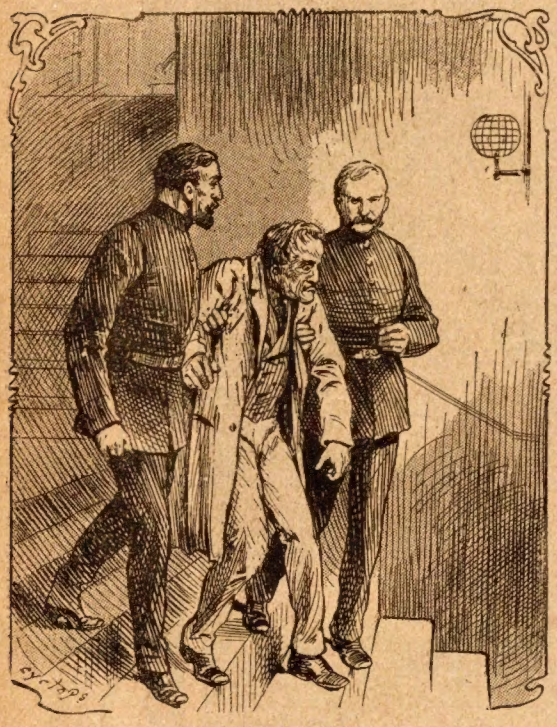
"This means five years," he whispered to the warder at his side, and with a muttered curse he advanced to the bar to plead to the indictment. He was charged under the

name of John Ward, and was said to be sixty years of age, though, as a matter of fact, he wanted thirteen years of that figure. The crimes laid to his account were burglary and feloniously shooting at the constable. To both of these counts Peace pleaded "Not guilty."

The case having been opened by Mr. Poland, Robinson was called as a witness. He gave a dramatic account of the events of the night in question, October 10, modestly remarking that he would not let his prisoner go though he had been shot. His evidence was confirmed by Sergeant Brown, who said that he had removed from the wrist of Peace a six-chambered revolver, of the very latest pattern, five chambers of which had been discharged.

Further for the prosecution, Constable Girling was called, and he told of the desperate struggle and of the heroism of his mate Robinson. He added that he had found on the prisoner a jemmy, gimlet, wedges, an auger, and other housebreaking implements.

The Inspector simply had to give formal evidence as to



Conducted to the cells below.

the charge being taken at the police-station, and he was followed by a servant-maid, who found the bullet, which had flattened against the drawing-room wall. That closed the case for the prosecution.

Brilliant as he was, Mr. Montague Williams found it hard to confront such evidence. He begged the jury not to connect his client with the numerous burglaries which had taken place around Blackheath. There was no doubt in this case that the prisoner had intended to commit burglary, but there was nothing in the evidence to show that he desired to kill the constable. He contended that the weapon exploded accidentally for the fifth shot, and that Peace had no idea of what he was doing. The previous shots had been intentionally fired "wide." This could not, therefore, be called an attempt to murder the policeman, and he pleaded that that count, at least, should be dismissed.

Mr. Justice Hawkins briefly reviewed the evidence, and sent the jury out to consider their verdict.

"This might mean seven years," commented Peace to one of his fellow-prisoners in the waiting cell. A very few minutes sufficed for the "twelve good men and true" to come to a decision, and they returned into court.

The judge hurried in, and Peace was brought to the bar to learn his fate. After asking the foreman whether the jury had come to a decision, and receiving an answer in the affirmative, the clerk of the court demanded: "How find you, gentlemen, is the prisoner guilty or not guilty?"

"Guilty on both counts," answered the foreman, at the same time handing to the judge a written document, and begging leave to repeat it.

Mr. Hawkins consenting, he said that the jury wished to put on record their appreciation of the gallant conduct of Constable Robinson, and hoped that he would receive some reward for his meritorious service to the State. They offered his lordship a paper embodying that resolution.

Mr. Justice Hawkins replied: "I am not surprised, gentlemen, that you have made this representation, for the constable has certainly behaved in a very gallant manner," and later in the day awarded Robinson £25 as a bonus.

At that instant Mr. Poland rose, and said that before passing sentence the learned judge might like to know something about the career of the prisoner. Peace turned pale. Had they recognised him as the man wanted for the Banner-Cross murder? Did they know that he was Charles Peace, and not Mr. Ward or Mr. Thompson? His mental agony was intense, but with that coolness which he seemed to be able to command at will he faced the court, and only the most careful observer could have noticed the anxiety depicted on his countenance.

The judge replied that he would be glad to learn anything about the prisoner that he could, and he was told that the police had found in Sheffield a very large quantity of goods which had been stolen from houses round Blackheath, and that no fewer than twenty-six persons had identified their property. There was no doubt that the prisoner was the burglar, and that, if the judge desired it, legal proof would be forthcoming on the following morning.

His lordship intimated that he did not think it necessary for him to postpone sentence for that proof, as he thought that the Court was already in possession of sufficient material to guide it in its judgment.

The Deputy-Clerk of Arraigns then told Peace to advance to the front of the dock to receive sentence, and desired him to say anything which he wanted to in mitigation of the crimes of which he had been found guilty by a jury of his fellow-citizens. Peace waved his hand, and made the following remarkable speech, which shows the canting spirit of the man. Much has been written attempting to show Peace up as a hero, but this effusion depicts the man in his true colours:

"I have this to say, my lord: I have not been fairly dealt with, and I declare before God that I never had the intention to kill the prosecutor, and all I meant to do was to frighten him, in order that I might get away. If I had had the intention of killing him I could easily have done it, but I never had that intention. I declare I did not fire five shots; I only fired four, and I think I could show you, my lord, now. I can prove that only four shots were fired. If your lordship will look at the pistol you will see that it goes off very easily, and the sixth barrel went off of its own accord after I was taken into custody. At the time the fifth shot was fired the constable had hold of my arm, and the pistol went off quite by accident. I really did not know that the pistol was loaded, and I hope, my lord, that you will have mercy on me. I feel that I have disgraced myself. I am not fit either to live or die. I am not prepared to meet my God, but still I feel that my career has been made to appear much worse than it really is. Oh, my lord, do have mercy on me; do give me one chance of repentance and of preparing myself to meet my God. Do, my lord, have mercy on me, and I assure you that you shall never repent it. As you hope for mercy yourself at the hands of the great God, do have mercy on me, and give me a chance of redeeming my character and preparing myself to meet my God. I pray and beseech you to have mercy on me!"

Mr. Justice Hawkins listened impassively to the harangue, making notes of anything that Peace said which appeared in conflict with the evidence, for though Mr. Hawkins has been accused of being a severe judge, he was as rigid in finding out what could be said on behalf of the prisoner as he was in paying attention to the case for the prosecution, and many an innocent man owes his escape from the trammels of the law to Mr. Hawkins's acumen. When the address was finished, the judge leant over his desk and spoke to the prisoner. He said that he had heard all the evidence, and it was impossible to believe that Peace had not fired the pistol with murderous intent. He had fired five times at Robinson. There was not the slightest doubt that he was an accomplished burglar, and had resorted to the use of fire-arms to effect his escape in case of detection. He had deliberately aimed at the officer's head, but the constable was guarding it with his arm, and the bullet penetrated that instead of the brain it was intended for.

"Notwithstanding your age, therefore," concluded the judge, "I feel that I should fail in my duty to the public if I did not pass upon you the extreme sentence of the law for the offence of which you have been convicted, which is that you be kept in penal servitude for the rest of your natural life."

Five years, seven years, even a possible ten years, the burglar had expected, but imprisonment for life! That was awful, unjust, infamous, he thought; nevertheless, later events showed that Mr. Justice Hawkins knew the class of man with whom he had to deal.

On hearing his fate Peace became faint, and staggered in the dock, but he was assisted by the warders and conducted to the cells below. There he sat dazed, until he was roused and taken into Newgate to commence his punishment, moaning from time to time, "It is unjust! I have not been fairly dealt with!" Next day he commenced the routine of prison life, and was set to pick oakum, an occupation at which he pretended he was a novice. Thus he hoped to avoid recognition, but he had not reckoned on the police.

While searching for the proceeds of Peace's many burglaries, they were led to the house at Darnall, Sheffield, where Mrs. Peace had fled to, and there they found an immense quantity of plate. This, they thought, looked as if Mrs. Peace was connected in some way with the burglar John Ward, alias Thompson, so as soon as Ward was satisfactorily disposed of, they arrested Mrs. Peace, and she was tried on a charge of receiving stolen property, knowing it to be stolen. By way of defence, Mrs. Peace pleaded that she had acted under the control of her husband, believing that she was not known as the wife of the Banner-Cross murderer. This was exactly what the authorities wanted her to say, and after a lengthy trial she was acquitted. Then attention was turned to Peace himself, and a detective was despatched to Sheffield to find any people who knew the convict by sight.

"THAT'S HIM!"

One morning, as Peace was marching round and round the exercise-yard, in company with a score or more prisoners clad in prison attire, a little party of gentlemen entered the yard with the Governor of the gaol. They stood for a moment looking at the wretched men who passed them on their monotonous walk, then suddenly one of the visitors pointed to "John Ward," and remarked, "That's him!"

Peace heard the sentence, and stepped out of the ranks towards the man, whose face he knew perfectly well, for he was none other than one of the Sheffield police. Then he knew that the game was up, and that it was only a question of weeks before he would have to pay the last penalty of the law; yet, in spite of this, his face never moved a muscle. His power of self-control was marvellous.

The Story of Madame Lafarge.

"And taste
The melancholy joys of evils pass'd;
For he who much has suffer'd, much will know."
—HOMER, "Odyssey."

HOW a Beautiful French Lady was charged with poisoning her Husband . . . After twelve weary years in prison, her innocence was proved; but her release was quickly followed by her death

PART II.

How Police Pertinacity and Prejudice forced a Prisoner into Penal Servitude.

NO time was lost in burying the unfortunate M. Lafarge, and then sinister rumours were spread abroad to the effect that he had been poisoned, and the old Madame Lafarge and Denis Barbier pointed to poor Marie as the criminal. On this charge she was arrested, and committed to prison pending her trial.

The routine of justice in France is very tedious, and though the arrest took place about the middle of January, it was not till the 3rd of September that she was brought to the bar to plead to the indictment. In the meantime, something very serious had happened. While the police were searching the premises of M. Lafarge, with a view to procuring incriminating evidence, they found some diamonds, which eventually were traced to the Viscountess de Leotaud, from whom it was said they had been stolen. A charge of theft was then added to that of murder.

While awaiting trial on the capital charge, Marie was arraigned for theft in July. She was not present in the court when the case was tried, but it suited the French police to have her convicted; and accordingly she was found guilty and sentenced to a term of imprisonment in her absence. Naturally, she appealed at once; but, before the appeal could reach the higher court, she was placed in the dock and accused of slaying her husband.

The case had created considerable interest throughout France, and thousands flocked into the little town of Tulle in the hopes of being able to get into the court-house; but it was closed to all who did not possess tickets from the President of the Palais de Justice. For the prosecution appeared M. Decons, Advocate-General of the Royal Courts at Limoges, while for the prisoner, M. Paillet and M. Desmoettes, both of the Royal Courts of Paris, held briefs.

The interests of Madame Lafarge, senior, were watched by M. Coralli. The Bench was occupied by four judges.

Some little excitement was aroused by the entrance of the Marquis de Nicolai and his family, one of whom was the Vicomtesse de Leotaud. Then the trial began.

The procedure in France differs widely from that which obtains in England, the first person examined being the prisoner, who is questioned by the presiding judge.

When Marie was called to the bar, she was very pale, and the prolonged imprisonment seemed to have told very heavily on her health. Her eyes, however, had lost none of their original brightness, and she bore the air of innocence.

The judge asked her if it was true that she had attempted to commit suicide, and she denied that she had ever done so. The passage of arms when she first arrived at her husband's house was entirely due to her innocence and to her fear of Charles Lafarge. She had caught sight of a former sweetheart at Orleans, it is true, and lamented that she was separated from him for ever. On the day that she sent her portrait to her husband, she also packed up five small cakes, which her mother-in-law had made. She was positive that it was five cakes she sent. She had bought arsenic on two or three occasions from the local chemist for the purpose of destroying rats. The white powder which she had been seen putting into the drinks was only powdered gum Arabic.

By the Judge: "On one occasion when you sent for arsenic, had not your husband just returned ill?"

Prisoner: "Certainly; that is so."

Judge: "How could you have the heart to trouble about rats when M. Lafarge was unwell?"

Prisoner: "I really do not see any harm in that. The rats were troublesome. They might have disturbed the sick man."

Then the judge elicited from her the main particulars which we gave in our former chapter, dragging each fact out by skilful questioning, and to all his queries Marie replied spiritedly.

On the next day, M. Barden, the physician who had attended the deceased man was called. He had prescribed for M. Lafarge during his illness. The chicken broth was sent to him for examination. On the surface of the bowl were flakes of coagulated white of egg, but some of these flakes contained arsenic. He assisted at the post-mortem examination on the dead man, and was of opinion at the time that it was not possible to say whether the ironmaster had been poisoned or not. He, therefore, directed that the viscera should be kept and analysed. This was done some days later, and no traces of arsenic could be discovered.

M. Jules de Lespinas, a doctor from Lubersac, was the next witness. He swore that he had attended M. Lafarge on the night of his death, having been sent for specially. The clerk, Denis, who had come to fetch him, told him, on the way to the house, that he had several times been asked by Madame Lafarge to purchase quantities of arsenic for her, and had done so; but, though she had requested him to say nothing about the matter, he had always told the old Madame first. M. Lafarge was suffering from colic, vomiting, and cramp when he saw him. He was told that whenever a vomiting fit seized him the master of the house used to send all out of the bedroom. He was told of the spying of Mlle. Brun and of a similar discovery by a Madame Buffieres, who also said that she had seen the accused putting white powder into beverages.

The illness of M. Lafarge rapidly increased, and his wife asked if she should send for a priest. He replied, "Certainly"; and the curé was hastily summoned. Madame Lafarge was greatly afflicted at the coldness which her husband manifested towards her, exclaiming frequently, "He no longer looks for me—he no longer takes my hand!" After a time the patient fainted, and when he recovered consciousness asked his sister to give him something to drink. Madame Lafarge ran to his side with a tumbler and a spoon, but he motioned her away, with a gesture of disgust.

"During the night," continued this witness, "Madame Lafarge was heard making efforts to vomit in her bedroom, which adjoined that of her husband. Mlle. Ponthier, who was in the sick room, remarked, 'If she has taken poison I hope it is strong enough to kill her.'" He was of the opinion that the deceased had been poisoned.

M. Massenat, another doctor, followed the last witness. He said that he had often attended M. Lafarge, but had never suspected that he was being poisoned. He performed the post-mortem examination, and the analysis of the entrails, and was convinced that the man died from arsenical poisoning. In support of this, he said that he had conferred with the great chemist, Orfila, and that he agreed with him. Later on he was forced to admit that he was informed that Orfila contradicted what he had stated, and then he told the court that he had written to the celebrated analyst, and received a letter, in which he said that he had not had any part of the body submitted to him, and had nothing to do with the matter at all.

At this point M. Paillet, for the defence, rose and said that he had also been in communication with Orfila, and that the "Prince of Science," as he called him, had written saying that the tests used by the local doctors were insufficient to determine the presence of arsenic. He produced the letter, but, as it is highly technical, little good would be done by reproducing it here.

After this, all the court could do was to order fresh experiments to be made forthwith; and on the following morning the ushers of the court brought in a box containing the remains of the viscera, and after the widow had been forced to examine the seals of the case, it was delivered over to Messrs. Dubois and Dupuytren, chemists of Limoges, for further analysis.

Lest time should be wasted, the mother of the deceased was then put into the witness-box. She said that she had made five cakes and seen them packed up. She became suspicious of her daughter-in-law after the incident of the

chicken broth. She insisted that nothing should be given to M. Lafarge unless she was present.

Marie was next cross-examined; for over the water they are not at all averse to making the prisoner incriminate himself, or herself, if they possibly can. She merely repeated her former statement that she and her husband were on the best possible terms, and that she was not in the least indifferent to his sufferings. The story that she had asked how long widows wore mourning in that part of France, she swore, was a perversion of her words, and that when she said that M. Lafarge was sure to die it was only the natural anxiety of a young bride.

When she was allowed to sit down again the two chemists re-entered the court with a long-winded document, full of superlatives and of praise for themselves. However, the sum and substance of it was that they had analysed one-half of each of the separate substances submitted to them, and returned the other half, and that the result of their analysis was as follows:

"We employed the apparatus of Mr. Marsh and all the known reagents, but all without effect, as we have not, in the result, obtained any arsenical matter. Gentlemen, we are conscious of having fulfilled our duty in the most scrupulous manner. We wish that scientific men of the greatest celebrity may be called to confirm our opinion, which is unanimous."

In England, such a declaration would have been sufficient; but the French police had made up their minds that Lafarge was poisoned, and were determined to fix the guilt on his wife. So a fresh investigation was ordered, and it was arranged that the body of the late ironmaster should be exhumed and brought to the court for examination!

THE SPYING OF MADAME BUFFIERES.

So as not to delay the course of justice, the judges decided to hear the evidence of other witnesses prior to the arrival of the body; so Denis Barbier was put into the box. He showed the most violent animus against Marie, but he rather overdid the story, and M. Paillet was able to show considerable discrepancies in his evidence. He mentioned the purchases of several packets of arsenic, and declared that Madame Lafarge had bound him to secrecy; but this the prisoner strenuously denied. M. de Chauvron then deposed to having advised M. Lafarge as to the course he should pursue towards his young wife, and the court adjourned. During that day's evidence, some remarkable documents were put in, in the shape of letters, which tended to show that the newly-married couple lived in perfect harmony.

The first was from Marie to her husband, in which she arranged that they should take their meals at exactly the same time, so that each might think of the other. This was a pretty thought, for, naturally, it was at meal-times only during the week that the loving pair saw one another, for the man was at his ironworks continually.

The second was from the husband, in reply to the last, gently chiding his wife for not eating at the proper time, and saying that truffled turkey was not very good for her, as she was not at all strong. As a remedy, he proposed that she should "(1) put eight or ten leeches on your stomach; (2) a poultice on the bites; (3) unprintable directions; (4) take a bath every third day, and go to bed immediately afterwards to avoid catching cold; (5) drink, by only mouthfuls at a time, cold new milk; (6) a short time after, some fruit, well-cooked; (7) suck the bones of a fowl and eat a little of the white meat." This looks more as if the husband was accustomed to treat the wife than the wife to drug her husband.

When the court reopened, the body had not arrived, and so the judges took the evidence of the servants, who said that they had received arsenic from their mistress, with instructions how to use it for the purpose of killing rats. To this old Madame Lefarge objected, saying that her son had never put down poison for vermin till Marie came amongst them.

"That," naïvely remarked the prisoner, "is the very reason why the animals were so plentiful."

During the whole of that day the prosecuting counsel so badgered the poor prisoner about trifles which had really nothing to do with the case, that when the court rose she fainted, and had to be bled before she was sufficiently well to return to her cell. But on the following morning a more terrible ordeal awaited her.

On the 8th of September the judges took their seats, and noticed that the court was empty, whereas it was full on all previous days.

The reason was not difficult to determine, for a most abominable stench—pardon the word—filled the building. The medical men, true to their instructions, had brought the body of M. Lafarge into the court for examination. It was in a great state of decomposition, a fact which, in the present day, would be indicative of the absence of any arsenical poisoning.

Hastily the judges and those compelled to be in the chamber sent for smelling bottles, which they held to their noses while the inquiry was pursued; but poor Marie was not allowed any such comfort, and for her it was worse, since she knew from whence the smell arose.

The chemists were sworn, and retired with their awful boxes into another room to pursue their investigations. Meanwhile, several unimportant witnesses were examined, one of whom was a M. Baffiere, who was present when the cake arrived, and who said that after M. Lafarge had tasted it he remarked that it was "not good for much." Only one large cake was received, of that he was positive.

After him came the prisoner's private maid, who spoke of the arrival at Glandier. The prisoner went up to the bath-room to have a bath, and the witness stood outside the door. Suddenly M. Lafarge came up, and wanted to watch his wife bathe, but she locked the door. "It is not proper to enter the room of a lady bathing," said the maid. "Is not it?" rejoined Lafarge. "At Glandier things go on very differently, and I'll soon make her act in another manner."

The chemists were not ready with their report when the time for adjournment came, but on the following morning they presented themselves, and read a long document, setting forth the result of their investigations. The one fact on which all were unanimous was that there was no trace of arsenic to be found in the body, in spite of the most exhaustive analysis. The announcement was followed by loud applause, and when the physicians who had previously suspected the presence of poison declared that they were perfectly satisfied that they were mistaken, the cheering was deafening.

But even then the police were not satisfied; so they sent what remained of the body to Professor Orfila for him to determine whether or no he could find any traces. It was therefore ordered that the court should adjourn.

"What?" exclaimed M. Paillet, for the prisoner, "adjourn! If you adjourn much more, you will have two corpses instead of one, and the crime will rest on your shoulders!"

Next day the Advocate-General addressed the jury for the Prosecution. He said that there was a terrible mystery somewhere. If the prisoner was proved to be innocent he would be the very first to hail the announcement with joy, and the prolonged inquiry would probably give a hint as to the actual perpetrator of the crime, for that there was poison—much poison—he had no doubt, though the doctors disagreed.

In reply, M. Paillet said that the continuation of the inquiry was cruelty. If M. Orfila said that he found arsenic, then the Prosecution would be satisfied, and would not permit the defence to apply to other chemists, though two commissions had declared that poison was not found, while if Orfila, an agent of the Prosecution, did not find any arsenic, or said that he did not, then recourse would be had to chemists in England, and even in Germany. Where was this case to end? Might they not eventually have to borrow another corpse to experiment upon?

Both parties having thus had a hit at one another, several more witnesses were examined, among them being Mlle. Brun, who said that when the box was packed by Marie it was merely tied with cords, but when opened at Paris it was nailed down. The agent of the carrier who received the package corroborated this evidence.

Then the chemists who had been sworn to examine the various articles found about the house were called, and they deposed that in the chicken broth they found a quantity of arsenic, and also in a little packet of powdered gum arabic, which was in the prisoner's apron pocket, and which she was in the habit of taking from time to time, about a grain of white arsenic was discovered. In all the other goods no poison was to be found.

Mlle. Ponthier was next examined, and she said that Marie had given the box of powder to her at once, without the least hesitation. She was present when M. Lafarge died, and, immediately after, old Madame Lafarge had gone to her daughter-in-law's bedroom and broken open a little secretaire, in which the accused used to keep her private papers. Not finding what she wanted, the old lady ordered witness to smash the back to find a secret drawer. This was done, and Madame extracted some papers. She knew that M. Lafarge was in difficulties over money matters, but she also knew that his wife had offered him all her fortune to help him to retrieve his position. After an old doctor, who had known Marie Lafarge for a long time, had testified to his belief in her innocence, the Advocate-General wished to stir up the charge of stealing diamonds again, and called on Mme. Nicolai, the mother of the Vicomtesse de Leotaud, to prosecute, that the action might then be tried in open court; but the old lady flatly refused to be sworn, and was fined for her contumacy. This was rather a blow to the prosecution, who had counted on thus turning the minds of the populace against the prisoner; for it must be remembered that the first hearing took place *in camera*. But their day of triumph—the triumph of prejudice and injustice—was at hand.

On the 14th of September Professor Orfila entered the court, and swore positively that he had discovered arsenic in the body of M. Lafarge, and declared that the arsenic did not come from the re-agents which he had used. That satisfied the Advocate-General, and he addressed the jury, begging them to find a verdict. What Mr. Paillet said was of little account, and Marie Lafarge was pronounced Guilty.

On hearing the verdict Marie fainted; but that mattered little to the President, who proceeded to pronounce sentence in her absence, remarking that doubtless she would be informed later of what she had to suffer. The sentence was that she be committed to hard labour for life, and be once exposed in the public square. That, to all appearances, settled the matter, and the court dispersed.

But in another part of France was a clever chemist, named Raspail, who had followed the conflicts of the scientists all through, doubted the accuracy of Orfila's results, and managed to purchase some of the same zinc which the professor had used in the performance of his tests. This he analysed, and found that it contained more arsenic than Orfila had discovered in the body submitted to him.

He was on his way to reveal this fact, timing himself to reach the court just before the close of the sessions, when he met with an accident which delayed him, and when he arrived at Tulle there was no one to listen to his protest. Nothing daunted, he appealed to the French Government; but, with unfailing regularity, the case was shelved from sitting to sitting. Still he did not give in, but yearly pestered the House of Deputies with his papers.

At last, in self-defence, they were compelled to hear him; and he, together with Orfila, to whom he had proved the mistake, and who was ready to admit it, were examined, with the result that Marie Lafarge was liberated; but not until she had suffered twelve years imprisonment and disgrace. Freedom did not agree with her, and she died about six months after her name was cleared from the stigma of murder.

There is one point which is of interest. What was Barbier doing in Paris? He had been mixed up in several shady transactions with his master. He knew the secret of the smelting process; he was the one who gave information about arsenic; and, it is more than probable, was the first to suggest arsenical poisoning. He alone could benefit by the death of M. Lafarge. Indeed, it is suggested that he annexed 22,000 out of the 25,000 francs which Lafarge had raised in Paris, since only 3,000 francs were found after his death; and it was remarked that thereafter Denis Barbier lived in affluence.

MURDER OF SIR EDMUNDBURY GODFRY.

This respectable and worthy gentleman having rendered himself very obnoxious to the papists of his time, they, in return, were determined to be revenged. After having dogged him for several days, they accomplished their wicked designs. On Saturday, October 12, 1672, under pretence of a quarrel, which they knew his care for the public peace would oblige him to prevent, about nine at night, as he was returning home, they got him into the Water gate at Somerset House. When he was thus trepanned in, and got out of hearing from the street, towards the lower end of the yard, Green, one of the assassins, threw a twisted handkerchief round his neck, and drew him behind the rails; which, notwithstanding his age and weakness, is objected against as improbable; though, taking him by surprise and in the dark, it was easy for Green to do, especially on three or four more of them immediately falling in to assist him, and thus they throttled Sir Edmundbury; and lest that should not be enough, they punched and kicked him on the breast, as sufficiently appeared when his body was found, by the marks on it; and lest he should not be dead enough, another of them, Girald, or FitzGirald, would have run him through, but was hindered by the rest, lest the blood should discover them: but Green, to make sure work, wrung his neck round, as was found afterwards on the inspection of the surgeons.

For the disposal of the body, they carried it up into a little chamber of Hill's, another of the murderers, who had been, or was Dr. Godwin's man, where it lay till Monday night, when they removed it into another room, and thence back again till Wednesday, when they carried him out in a sedan about twelve o'clock, and afterwards upon a horse, with Hill behind him, to support him, till they got to Primrose Hill, or, as some say it is called, Green-Bury Hill, near a public-house called White-house, and threw him into a ditch, with his gloves and cane on the bank near him, and his own sword run through him, on purpose to persuade the world he had killed himself.

JONATHAN BRADFORD

EXECUTED FOR MURDER.

SHOWING THAT CIRCUMSTANTIAL EVIDENCE IS NOT INFALLIBLE.

THE details of this case, though meagre, are most dramatic; and we publish the story at a time when the United Kingdom is divided in opinion as to the guilt or innocence of at least two prisoners who are charged, purely upon "evidence of circumstance," with brutal murders.

Early in the last century, one Jonathan Bradford kept an inn in the city of Oxford. A gentleman (Mr. Hayes), attended by a man servant, put up one evening at Bradford's house; and in the night, the former being found murdered in his bed, the landlord was apprehended on suspicion of having committed the barbarous and inhospitable crime. The evidence given against him was to the following effect: Two gentlemen who had supped with Mr. Hayes, and who retired at the same time to their respective chambers, being alarmed in the night with a noise in his room, and soon hearing groans as of a wounded man, got up in order to discover the cause, and found their landlord, with a dark lantern and a knife in his hand, standing in a state of astonishment and horror over his dying guest, who almost instantly expired.

It was distinctly sworn that the knife held by the unhappy innkeeper was in no way stained by blood, nor could any marks be found upon his clothings. The taverner was so astounded at the seeming proofs of guilt which were brought against him that he could bring no defence. Even if the true story were believed, he had committed a crime that could be punished by death, for he had undoubtedly entered the room with the intent to pillage. He, therefore, contented himself by murmuring, "I did not do it."

The jury found Bradford "Guilty," and he duly suffered on the gallows. But the fate of this man may serve as a lesson to jurymen to be extremely guarded in receiving circumstantial evidence.

The facts attending the above dreadful tragedy were not fully brought to light until the death-bed confession of the real murderer; a time when we must all endeavour to make our peace with God.

Mr. Hayes was a man of considerable property, and greatly respected. He had about him, when his sad destiny led him under the roof of Bradford, a considerable sum of money; and the landlord knowing this, determined to murder and rob him. For this horrid purpose he proceeded with a dark lantern and a carving-knife, intending to cut the throat of his guest while yet sleeping; but what must have been his astonishment and confusion to find his intended victim already murdered, and weltering in his blood!

The wicked and unworthy servant had also determined on the robbery of the money of his master. He quietly entered the room, and stealthily crept to the farther side of the bed, where he thought he had observed the gentleman place his wallet. He fumbled in the dark, and, while doing so, his master awoke. The servant drew a sheath knife and stabbed his victim in the throat. Then, as the wretched man rolled about in his death agony, he felt beneath the pillows and secured the valuables. Creeping on tip-toe from the room, he had just reached his own apartment when the landlord entered the sleeping chamber of his already murdered guest. Truly a terrible story!

JONATHAN BRADFORD IN MR. HAYES' ROOM.

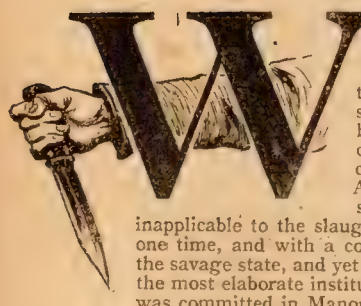
William Godfrey Youngman,

The . . . Walworth . Murderer .

How a human butcher ruthlessly slaughtered his lover, mother, and two brothers in a vain attempt to secure £100.

"Like one
Who having unto truth, by telling of it,
Made such a sinner of his memory
To credit his own Lie."
—SHAKESPEARE, "Tempest."

PART I.



WHATEVER effect the diffusion of education and wealth in preventing that general mental irritation which results in an evil state of society, it certainly has not prevented the occasional perpetration of crimes of startling atrocity. A butchery—for the term "a series of murders" seems inapplicable to the slaughter of several persons at one time, and with a common motive—worthy of the savage state, and yet finding its object in one of the most elaborate institutions of civilised society—was committed in Manor Place, Walworth, on the morning of July 31, 1860.

The inhuman brute who perpetrated these fearful deeds—if it be not a libel upon the inferior animals so to designate a wretch who, if he acted with the ferocity and cunning proper to animals in the pursuit of their prey, yet slew those whom the wild beast would have defended and cherished—this reverse of nature, having paid his addresses to a respectable young woman, induced her to be a party to an insurance on her life for £100, he being the insurer, and then inveigled her to his mother's home, where, securing his predestined victim within his meshes, ruthlessly slaughtered her; and then, in order to keep suspicion from himself, and to have a person on whom to throw the guilt, who should not be able to deny it, he slew his mother and his two brothers. The single object, preconceived and preconcerted, of so much guilt, was to obtain possession of the sum of £100 from the insurance office. For this sordid purpose, and for this purpose alone—without the miserable palliation of passion, or desire, or jealousy, or revenge—this William Youngman did not hesitate to involve in one fearful massacre four persons; one the parent generally held in the most affectionate love; two his brothers; and the fourth a young female whom he had lured into his snare by professions of devoted attachment. His plot was as brutally stupid as it was cowardly and cruel. Had he so contrived the destruction of his victim that the death had passed as the ordinary incident of mortality, the murderer, not being her husband, could not have obtained the money; he had no interest in her life such as would sustain an insurance, and the office would not have paid.

The precise theory upon which the massacre, when accomplished, was to be explained, appears to have been this: The victim having been lured home, the mother was suddenly to become maniac; that in an access of frenzy she would rise in the night, deal death all around, destroying her husband and her children, and, in the general slaughter, this insured life also; and then that she herself should perish in the last attempt by the hand of her son in self-defence. The exact steps by which the terrible plot was worked out cannot be known, nor did the evidence supply more than the means of conjecture. The murderer made sure that there should be no living testimony against him. He stabbed each victim several times to the heart, and then cut through throat and arteries, to make all safe. The girl must have fallen dead upon the landing as she stepped out of her room—perhaps called by her lover, or startled by a sound; the mother probably next stepped forth, and the son seems to have failed in his first stab, driving his knife deep into his mother's flesh before he could reach the throat and sever the arteries. The younger child died unresisting in his bed. The elder brother, however, came to the landing-place during the general slaughter, and struggled for his life, drawing the sharp steel through his fingers, and maintaining the contest at least long enough for a scream. No cry was heard to alarm those who were separated from this scene on all sides only by a plank or a thin wall. When at last a spectator came, the murderer was ready with his story. All that blood had not washed it out of his head.

"This is all mother's doings; she murdered my two brothers and my sweetheart, and I, in self-defence, believe that I have murdered her."

The accused, aged twenty-five, described as a tailor, was placed at the bar of the Central Criminal Court, in the following August, before Mr. Justice Williams, to take his trial for the murder of Mary Wells Streeter. There were three other indictments against him, charging him with the murder of Elizabeth Youngman, his mother, and Thomas Neale Youngman and Charles Youngman, his brothers.

The prisoner was a common-looking young man. He was well dressed, and during the whole of the proceedings he exhibited the most extraordinary coolness and self-possession; and even while his father was under examination he did not evince the least emotion.

The facts of the case were fully stated by counsel, and the usual formalities associated with the grim proceedings of that chamber of sighs—the Old Bailey—were proceeded with as they had been on very many occasions previously, and have been since. The old court-house, notwithstanding the seductive radiations of a glorious summer's day, which forced their way through the stern-looking apertures, glazed and unglazed, contributed no brightness to the solemn environments of the dock, the bar, or the bench. Judge, jury, counsel, and spectators were all visibly impressed by the gravity of the issues of the moment, when a fellow-being, himself, as has been stated, outwardly, at least, the most indifferent, was to be adjudged guilty or innocent of a charge which, if proved, could lead to no other finality than extinction by means of that most ignominious instrument—the gallows, with the memory for many a day of a life which it would have been well for the world if it had not been lived.

But to realise fully the merits of the case as they were recorded at the time, we must fall back upon the evidence adduced by the respective witnesses at the trial. To be faithful to history, it is necessary to detail at some length the testimony given in the case, for so adroitly had the miscreant set to work in the accomplishment of his fell design, and with such deliberate cunning had he marshalled the whole of his literally sanguinary acts, that only by the most patient extraction of facts, willingly or unwillingly attested, was it possible to lay bare the introspective circumstances. Forensic skill was then, as now, the refinement of art in reducing intangibilities to a complete chain of evidence, which brought the truth to a finality in the complicated case of William Godfrey Youngman, to which exception could be taken by no one.

Observing, therefore, the line we have suggested, we will give an outline of the bloody scene which met the gaze of one James Bevan in the shambles that had been made of the sleeping chamber occupied by the victims. This witness, whose evidence really forms the crux of the situation, occupied the first floor of the house, 16, Manor Place, on the night of the murder, together with his wife and son. The prisoner's father occupied the top floor of the house, and the family consisted of the wife, two little boys, the prisoner, and Mary Wells Streeter, who, as will appear later, was inveigled into the house, which was an important element in the culprit's devilish scheme. It was understood that the accused had come to pay his father a holiday visit, which, as it would seem, related only to the sleeping hours following activities in the day connected with the maturity of the plot. At a short time before six o'clock on the morning of July 30, in the month immediately preceding the trial, the man Bevan heard an unusual noise in the upper portion of the house, by which he was so startled that he immediately left his room, being satisfied that he heard a sound resembling the fall of a human body, and any doubts which he may have entertained were dispersed by a loud knocking at his door, when he became vis-à-vis to a Mr. Beard, who, with his wife, also occupied a portion of the house. "For God's sake," frantically exclaimed Beard, "come here—there is murder!" Bevan proceeded upstairs, and the first horrible picture which he viewed was the lifeless body of the elder of the two brothers, who lay stark and rigid in his night-clothes on the landing. Beside him, surrounded by a perfect deluge of blood, lay the remains of the young girl Streeter, and a short distance away, lying face downward—the most touching picture of all—were the remains of the murderer's aged mother—that mother who

had cherished and nurtured and aided the toddling infant who was one day, with one dastardly blow, to crush out the life-blood of the one person above all whose claim for protection, according to all human law, stands pre-eminent upon her offspring.

The foregoing details are substantially the facts as they pertained to the work of the assassin. In criminal law the magnum opus of judicial procedure is to define the motive which has led to the perpetration of the capital crime. In the case of Youngman, this was very apparent, and there was but one point in the defence, stoutly maintained by the prisoner, that the prosecution had to contest, and that was that the deed had been perpetrated by the mother in a moment of mental aberration!

"This is all mother's doings; she murdered my two brothers and my sweetheart, and I, in self-defence, believe that I have murdered her."

Such was the oft-reiterated statement of Youngman to various persons, as he stood the centre figure of the group of helpless victims whom he had done to death. It was the apparent mastery over his feelings—with how much effort none can tell. Although his days were already numbered, the cynosure of the court held the same stolid demeanour, from which there must be no relaxing, and to which now, more than ever, there must be the most resolute firmness, without the faintest trace of swerving from the main chance.

We have been told that the science of psychology is very diligently studied and persevered in by the judges, whose immobility, however, would lead to the supposition that study, in any form, has no attraction for them. If the judge "on the rota" who had the case of Youngman on hand was inclined towards the occult, he would find abundant materials for study, for the physiognomy of the accused man presented many features which could not fail to inspire investigation. Some of the outlines on the man's face were decidedly contradictory, for the close observer would ever and anon find a glint of innocence overspreading a fairly open countenance; but this expression would be neutralised by a glance of low cunning, which was enhanced by a pair of steely-grey eyes, and the compression of thin lips, sometimes tightened, and

YOUNGMAN MURDERS MISS STREETER.

keystone to the entire situation, so far as the culprit's case went. It was the only loophole out of which escape was possible. Unflinchingly, the most stubborn adherence to this theory must be persevered in, and how well this was persisted in, with that cunning tenacity to purpose which the criminal is keen to observe, by the slayer in this case was perhaps never paralleled in the whole history of the world's criminology.

In the day's proceedings, it would be impossible to contemplate a more touching sight than the approach of the stricken father to the witness-box. The pen has not yet been unsheathed which could possibly describe the emotions of this thrice-bereaved old man as he, overwhelmed with grief, proceeded to give that most damning evidence which was to place the noose around the neck of his dehumanised son. The Court, with one sympathetic, vibrating chord, melted at the sight. Ladies—"the quality," then as now, revelled in the show of the tensest human misery—of whom it was said there were many present, wept copiously, and the natural elements at this point seemed to join in the concert of woe, by the foregathering of mountainous clouds which completed the gloom of the acrid chamber of justice. There was but one figure in that assemblage which preserved an

producing the effect of a downward curve at the extreme right of the mouth, completed such a picture of brutish instinct that any momentary impression of admiration over a temporary redeeming expression would speedily produce feelings of repulsion when the sinister characteristics of the man incontinently and unconsciously revealed their presence. Although we believe this delicate science was not so much cultivated then as now, when its apostles and devotees will travel many miles to pursue its object-lesson, it is pretty evident that the president of the Court which decided the fate of Youngman penetrated the very depths of the soul of his vis-à-vis, and doubtless his reflections resulted in the elucidation of several points which were subsequently reflected in his charge to the jury.

John Youngman, the father, who created such a pathetic interest in the Court, as we have already described, will tell his sad story in the next chapter.

TO BE CONCLUDED.

A CULPRIT asked Jack Ketch if he had any commands to the other world. "Why," said he, "not many. I'll only," added he, as he adjusted the knot, "just trouble you with a line."

Poisons;

THE MYSTERIOUS DRUGS which silently deal death, now popularly described for the first time . .

ARSENIC, ITS EFFECTS AND ANTIDOTES.

THE FELON'S FAVOURITE SECRET POISON.

(Continued.)

WE cannot leave our description of this most interesting and historic poison without mentioning a couple of very amusing incidents which have, within comparatively recent times been brought about by arsenic. In both cases the chemist who supplied the supposed drug was a man of resource.

The first anecdote is vouched for by no less a person than the late Sir Robert Quain, one of the most eminent pathologists of the nineteenth century, and concerns a man upon whom he was called to perform a post-mortem. The man was a stone-mason, and one day informed his wife that he had just taken arsenic. She was alarmed, and rushed off to the Western General Dispensary. The senior surgeon was out, and two students took him in hand and commenced the prescribed remedies with all the activity which so urgent a case demanded. They gave him tartar emetic, pumped out his stomach, pumped in dialysed iron and iron oxide, and generally tried everything that the books prescribed. In twenty-four hours the man died. Then the coroner's officer went round to the chemist and asked him why he had supplied the man with arsenic. "I sold him no poison," replied the chemist. "I thought he was off his head when he came." "What did you give him?" pursued the officer. "Oh, merely some alum and a little cream of tartar! Perpectly harmless; and I labelled it 'poison.'" When the distinguished surgeon performed the post-mortem, he could not find a trace of the drug in the body except a large quantity of unaffected arsenic in the stomach. Beyond this, there was no trace of arsenical poisoning in the membranes or intestines. So he sent for the students, and after cross-examining them severely they confessed that they were horrified to find that the man had died without taking arsenic at all, and so had pumped some into the stomach just before the post-mortem began!

Other chemists might not have had the same amount of sharpness to spot that the man was intending to commit suicide, and would have given him the poison. In this case, the man's life was lost through nervous action, and, possibly, through the well-meant attentions of the two students. But there is another case on record which did not end fatally, and which also reflects credit on the clever chemist. The tale is told by a well-known authority on poisons, and runs as follows: One morning a seafaring man entered a chemist's shop, and, waiting till the chemist was disengaged, asked him in a solemn voice for a shilling's worth of strong laudanum. The chemist inquired what is was wanted for, and the man explained that he had just returned from a voyage, and found that his sweetheart had fled with another man, and he was tired of life.

The man of drugs attempted to remonstrate with the would-be suicide, but the sailor informed him that he would shoot himself if the poison was not given to him. Seeing that it was useless to argue, the chemist consented, and mixed up a draught of aloes, strong as a purgative, but harmless as a poison.

"Now, add a shilling's worth of arsenic," added the man.

"Certainly," said the chemist, as he added a good dose of magnesia.

"Now, throw in a shilling's worth of prussic acid," continued the love-lorn mariner.

"Right," said the chemist, and he carefully measured out a small quantity of essence of almonds into the glass, which he then handed to the sailor, who drank it off at one gulp and walked out of the shop.

The chemist watched him go across the road, and, to his astonishment, saw him lie down on the pavement and close his eyes. Children passing looked at him, and wondered, and an occasional passer-by glanced at the prostrate figure, and imitated the Levite. But the chemist knew that a time for action would come, and when he saw the sailor, groaning, spring to his feet and rush down the road as fast as his feet could carry him, he laughed to himself, and thought that three shillings was a cheap price for the broken-hearted lover to pay for life!

We will now deal with a poison which at present is of great interest, namely:

ANTIMONY.

Like arsenic, antimony is one of the historic poisons. The early Greek and Roman physicians made little cups of the silver-like metal, which they cold to their patients as permanent emetic cups, and mention is even made of a permanent emetic pill which obtained in the early days of medicine, and which consisted of nothing but a small ball of antimony. Thus its properties as an emetic were long recognised, but it was not till 1480 A.D., when Basil Valentinus wrote his Materia Medica, that any real knowledge of the metal was given to the world.

Antimony is found in the metallic state, mixed with arsenic and silver, in nature, but as a rule it is separated from the sulphide, which occurs more abundantly than the actual metal. For years the great difficulty in purifying antimony was to get rid of the arsenic with which it is usually associated, and it was not till the process of driving off the metalloid in the form of vapour was discovered that antimony could be used with anything like safety. Now it can be obtained in a perfectly pure state, and the danger attending its use has been greatly diminished.

The poisonous properties of antimony were really discovered accidentally. Under its original name of stibium, it was largely used by Egyptian beauties to darken their eyelids and eyelashes, and an eye thus decorated forms one of the hieroglyphs found on the Egyptian monuments and papyri. One of the princesses of the house of Usr-maat-Ra, was apparently given to experimenting, and selected one of her handmaids to try the effect of a dose of stibium. Needless to say the maid did not survive the ordeal, in spite of the attentions of the priests of the temple, who attempted to save her life. From then dates the use of antimony as a poison. Commercially, antimony forms part of Britannia metal and of type metal; it is also used in manufacturing machinery bearings. But it is not with the mechanical uses of antimony that we have to do.

The poisoner usually obtains antimony as tartar emetic, or antimony tartrate, a white powder which leaves a strong metallic taste in the mouth. In doses of more than a grain at a time it is a strong emetic, and for that reason may not have a poisonous effect, being rejected by the stomach before it has had time to exhibit its lethal properties. Where, however, a deadly dose has been retained, the patient exhibits all the symptoms of poisoning with a strong irritant. There is great heat and burning in the throat, with difficulty in swallowing. This is followed by a violent pain in the region of the stomach, incessant vomiting and purging, faintness and extreme depression. The patient rapidly collapses, though there may be a long period of consciousness, accompanied by cramp. There is usually a premonition of death and a fear of approaching dissolution. Death results either from exhaustion or from gastro-enteritis set up by the drug. It is a most painful form of death.

At present we have only one antidote which is of the least service in cases of antimony poisoning, namely tannic acid. That drug has the effect of changing all the antimony in the stomach into an insoluble, non-irritating powder, and thus it can be removed from the stomach, either by means of a stomach-pump or by the action of any other emetic. Stimulants should be freely given to keep up the strength, and a little digitalis may be administered by a medical man to counteract the depression. The chances of life in cases of antimony poisoning are few, for the irritant nature of the poison is such that the after effects of the dose are usually fatal.

So much for the poison when administered in large doses. From the virulence of the symptoms and the distinctive taste of antimony, it will be seen that the deadly drug is very easily recognised, and for that reason was not thought much of by the older poisoners, who preferred a medium which was slower in its operation and none the less sure. Had they, however, possessed the knowledge of the poison which we have to-day, they would have found that antimony can be administered secretly, and the doses calculated so as to destroy life at the moment selected by the poisoner, thus rivalling the vaunted potions of the Borgias.

Science has shown us that antimony, unlike most poisons, is far more deadly when administered in repeated small quantities, than when only one large dose is given, and by regulating the doses the victim can be killed without presenting any symptoms incompatible with ordinary disease of

the stomach. Thus it was that the infamous Dr. Pritchard killed his wife. For more than three months he daily administered to the unfortunate woman minute doses of antimony tartrate, occasionally adding a little aconite, when he saw that his wife could not bear the emetic action of the poison. All the symptoms of acute gastro-enteritis were set up, and Mrs. Pritchard gradually sank and died. But three weeks before her demise the doctor had removed his mother-in-law with the same poison, though administered in one large dose, and suspicion was aroused; so a post-mortem was made, and the murdered lady's body found to be impregnated with antimony.

The mother-in-law was then exhumed, and it was seen that she too had fallen beneath the arts of the poisoner. Much medical evidence was called by Dr. Pritchard to prove that his wife had really succumbed to gastric fever, the disease entered on the certificate of death, and when he found that there was certainty that Mrs. Pritchard had been poisoned with antimony tartrate, he tried to throw the guilt on to an illiterate servant girl of seventeen years of age, with whom he had carried on an intrigue. All his efforts were unavailing, and he was hanged at Glasgow in 1865, a fate which he richly deserved.

The tartar emetic also figured in 1876 in another highly sensational case known as the Bravo mystery. A young barrister, named Bravo, returned one evening to his house at Balham, a suburb of London, and complained of feeling a little fatigued and faint. He rested a short time and had a bath, after which he ate his dinner in company with his wife and a lady friend. The party partook of all the dishes on the table, but while the ladies drank sherry, Mr. Bravo drank Burgundy. Shortly after dinner he retired to his room, and the ladies began to make preparations for going to bed. Before, however, they had time to undress, they were summoned to the barrister's room, where they found him violently ill, vomiting out of the window. To Mrs. Ricardo he declared that he had taken poison, but later on he denied that he had done so. After lying in agony for fifty-five hours, Mr. Bravo died. As the symptoms were indicative of antimony poisoning, a post-mortem examination was made, but no antimony was found in the stomach, though the condition of the lining membrane of the stomach indicated that some irritant poison had brought about death.

Outside the window traces of the barrister's vomiting were found and submitted to analysis. Abundant antimony was found in the collected matter, and a further analysis of the body showed that antimony was in the liver. The remains of the bottle of Burgundy which Mr. Bravo had partaken of at dinner could not be found. There was no suspicion attached to anyone, nor was there any reason why the barrister should have taken his own life. The whole affair was shrouded in mystery, and a mystery it has remained to this day.

Twenty-six years elapsed before antimony again figured in our courts, a Pole named Klosowski, alias Chapman, being charged with administering that drug to three women, who had lived with him at different times. Rather an interesting feature in the case was the condition of the body of one of the women, who had been lying in her grave for five years. According to the Home Office expert, Dr. Stevenson, the corpse was as fresh as if it had only just been buried. This was due to the action of the antimony which had been administered, and clearly demonstrated the fact that preparations of that metal have the property of converting bodies into mummies.

The theory on which the prosecution relied was that the prisoner had administered repeated doses of tartar emetic, given in brandy and water to his victims, setting up violent inflammation of the stomach and consequent death. In this the hand of the medical man is again apparent, and it was contended that Klosowski had been partially trained in the practice of medicine in his native country, though, at the time of his arrest he was keeping a tavern.

Antimony tartrate could be easily dissolved in water, but not in really good brandy. In ordinary public-house brandy a small quantity of it in the form of tartar emetic could not be seen. If the brandy were 25deg. under proof, an ounce would absorb two grains and still look quite clear. If tartar emetic were put into ordinary brandy and water, it would be quite clear

The smallest known fatal dose is three-quarters of a grain for a child and two grains for an adult, administered at once, but a succession of doses of a tenth of a grain each would speedily prove fatal even to a man in robust health. It is this that makes antimony such a dangerous drug, even in the hands of a skilled physician. Fortunately the poison is very easily recognised, and the poisoner would assuredly expiate his crime on the scaffold.

A Jew's Dreadful Doom.

THE following remarkable narrative is noticed by the learned Wagensel, and confirmed by an inscription in the town-house at Vienna:

Joachim Engelberger was a Bohemian Jew of the 17th century, who, contrary to the practice of modern Israelites, neglected or despised the common resources of industry and trade, and devoted himself, as far as poverty would admit, to the sedentary occupation of literature.

But books, however they might soothe his solitary hours, do not appear to have improved his morals or added to his fortune; he was detected in stealing plate from the synagogue at Prague, and committed to prison.

In this place he was visited by a holy father of the Catholic Church, who promised him not only pardon, but a considerable reward, if he would renounce the faith of his forefathers.

The offender accepted this well-timed offer, and was soon after received into the bosom of the Church, with considerable ceremony, and a pompous procession.

What the convert had done, he was able and willing to defend; he published a justification of the step he had taken, and stated in his book satisfactory reasons for having embraced the Gospel dispensation; this defence of his conduct, which was well-written, procured for him the patronage of several men, and occasioned his taking a journey to Vienna, where he became popular, and, for a short time, was well received by Ferdinand the Third, Emperor of Germany. In return he robbed the royal treasury; but was discovered, and condemned to suffer death.

In prison he exhibited every appearance of contrition and repentance, reserving to himself a consoling persuasion that the emperor, after the favour he had experienced, would not leave him to the ignominy of a public execution. But in this instance the hand of justice was not arrested by the interference of favouritism.

On the appointed day preparations actually commenced: a scaffold was erected, and the prisoner led forth to punishment.

Beholding the terrible apparatus of death, he demanded if any hope of pardon remained, and, being answered none, he fixed his eyes for a moment on the ground; then suddenly roused by the violence of outrageous disappointment, or the anguish of long-suppressed sincerity, he dashed to pieces a cross which had been placed in his hand, and addressing himself to the people, publicly renounced, in coarse and bitter language, the Christian revelation, which, he owned, with shame, he had professed from unworthy motives, but had never believed.

To the terrified and trembling confessor, who asked him if he had not just received the miraculous wafer? he replied, "I received, it is true, that detestable morsel into my mouth, but have not swallowed it."

The people, who, echoing the voice of their teachers, had a few months before almost deified a renegado for defying the gods of his country, could restrain their fury no longer; they rushed towards the scaffold, and but for military interference, would have torn the culprit to pieces. He was taken back to prison, and the exasperated crowd, disappointed in their object, wreaked their vengeance on a number of Jews who were present, on their shops, and their goods; the day ended in uproar and confusion.

The execution, which had been interrupted by popular tumult, took place a few days after; the culprit being previously dragged on a hurdle through the principal streets of Vienna.

To prove, if any proofs were wanting, that the spirit of proselytism is as distant from humanity as it is from common sense, a new sentence, to gratify, as it were, and satisfy public hatred, had, in the interval, been passed upon him; the execution of which, but for salutary and impressive deduction, is too shocking to relate.

Repeating, as long as he could speak, that he hoped his sufferings would expiate his crimes, this miserable wretch's right hand was cut off and burnt before his eyes; his tongue was torn from his mouth, and his body was then suspended by the feet from the gallows over a slow fire; savage and furious dogs in the meantime lacerating his flesh.

Death concluded the odious butchery, and the ashes of the malefactor were thrown into the Danube; but the water of ten thousand Danubes cannot wash away the foul remembrance of such a transaction, or efface the memory of zeal so barbarous and bloody; a crime produced or aggravated by the folly and bigotry of those who punished it.

BLAKESLEY,

THE BLOODTHIRSTY.

HOW a Young Ruffian freed himself from parental control, and trod the downward path.

"Anger and jealousy can no more bear to lose sight of their objects than love."

GEORGE ELIOT—*The Mill on the Floss.*

PART II.

His Flight from Justice—His Weary Wanderings, Arrest, Trial, and Execution.

THE dread task completed, as described in our opening chapter, the wretched Blakesley was now placed in a position of the greatest difficulty. Absolutely destitute and friendless, overcome by the strain which had naturally exhausted his strength, he found himself a nomad without a vestige of hope, and with nothing to console him but the liberty he possessed, but which he must have poignantly felt, could not be his for long. Retribution was already at the heel of the miserable wretch. He had scarcely shaken off the dust of the City of London from his feet, when he became conscious of his helplessness. Wandering aimlessly, and borne down by many crushing conflicts, he was first of all to endure the pinch of hunger, with only the feast of Nebuchadnezzar to allay his cravings. In his disconsolate peregrinations along the Hertford road, he had been observed in the woods near Potter's Bar, the embodiment of his Adamic forerunner, and subsequently he was spoken to by a person who knew him perfectly well, but who at that time had received no tidings of the dread events in Eastcheap. He informed this person that he was going to Hatfield, and it was believed that he afterwards turned in another direction.

On the following morning he was seen begging on the road near a place called Bell's Bar, whence he proceeded to Hatfield Woodside. He again solicited charity at a public-house, saying that even a cold potato would be acceptable, as he was nearly starved. He was not, however, relieved, and he then lay down for two hours under a hedge. From public-house to public-house the wanderer went, and from each he emerged unrefreshed and unrelieved.

At Langley he met with better success, for there a Mrs. Nightingale, the hostess of the "Angel," compassionately gave the miserable mendicant a penny, which brought at least some relief, if only to realise that he was in touch with humanity again. Encouraged by this start, he proceeded to Langley toll-bar, where his commercial instincts again asserted themselves. There he encountered the toll-keeper, to whom he offered for sale a razor strop, a corkscrew, and a hair-brush. The toll-keeper, however, probably a man of primitive tastes, had no need of either of these commodities, and declined to accept them, but handed over twopence to the traveller, who was still further encouraged to greater efforts. He then proceeded to the "Horseshoe," where he again essayed a deal with his trifles among some drovers, but the quid pro quo on this occasion was to be a pipe of tobacco, a negotiation which was rendered all the more intangible because Blakesley was known to be a non-smoker. One of the drovers, however, purchased the strop—which furnished a clue to his pursuers—for a penny.

Arrived at Welwyn, the fugitive manifested a keen desire to see a London newspaper, for which he asked at several public-houses. Continuing his journey, and begging of each individual he met on the way, he reached Moorings, on the

HE SPRANG UP EXCITEDLY AND DROPPED THE SHEET.

London side of Hitchin, where he again asked for a London paper. Eventually he succeeded in his quest, at the "Rose and Crown." He was observed by the landlord to look over the paper for a considerable time, and when he came to a certain part he sprang up excitedly, dropped the sheet on the floor, and precipitately left the house. As by some spell of fascination Blakesley held on to this neighbourhood, and on the Saturday he was seen wandering about the town, whilst on the following day, at one o'clock, it would appear that he was absolutely crushed by the subtle importunities of hidden emotion. The sanctity of the day, and the appearance of happiness and rural peace by which he was environed, must have had appalling influences on the mind of the miserable outcast. He gave vent to this distress in the exclamation, "Oh, dear! Oh, dear!" A passing constable went up to him and asked if he were in a state of destitution. He replied in the affirmative, and the constable took him in custody, to be brought before the local magistrates.

When he was thus immured, Blakesley said, "I am a miserable man!" He then asked the police if they had heard of "the murder," and he was informed that they had, and he replied, "I am the man!" He asked if his wife were alive, and he was informed in the affirmative. "Thank God!" he exclaimed. While in the station-house the prisoner was heard to cry frantically:

"Oh, that shriek! that shriek! I hear it now. I did not mean to hurt Burdon or his wife. I meant to kill my own wife and then myself. If Burdon had not got between me and my wife, I would not have hurt him, for the blow was aimed at my wife!" This statement was evidently made to create a false issue, for the murdered man, as conclusively proved, was asleep at the time of the attack, and his sister-in-law had been already assaulted.

An unprecedented scene was presented at the Mansion House on the arrival of the self-confessed prisoner, and the usual magisterial inquiry resulted in the evident committal.

The Old Bailey was crowded to suffocation on Friday, the 29th day of October, when Blakesley was arraigned on the capital charge. Among the spectators there were the usual My Lord and Lady Tom Noddys—a perfect bevy of beauty and lovers of the sensational. But it was to witness no heroic gladiator that they had come on this occasion, for the picture presented by the felon in the dock was one of the most contemptible and abject imaginable. Lord Abinger, the presiding judge, perceiving the utter prostration of the culprit, directed that he should be accommodated with a seat, and into this the prisoner dropped himself, covering his face with his handkerchief, an attitude he maintained almost entirely throughout the proceedings.

A startling incident momentarily varied this posture, when the widow of the murdered man entered the witness-box. Formally asked by counsel if she saw the prisoner on September 21, Mrs. Burdon excitedly answered, "I see him now—(pointing to the dock)—the murderer!" The poor woman lost all power of self-restraint, and her frantic gesticulations were startling to witness.

In harmony with this outburst, which thrilled the spectators, Blakesley manifested extreme agitation. He leaned back in his chair and groaned loudly, swaying backward and forward in the very abandonment of remorse. "Mercy! mercy!" he cried; "in heaven's name save me—take me away from here!" In a case of the kind, where guilt was admitted, there was but one feature to be discussed—a plea of insanity, which was industriously urged by counsel, who brought forward much evidence in support of the theory. But although the most was made of the defence on this basis, and the prisoner's counsel with consummate address employed the most persuasive eloquence and a superlative rhetoric, the balance turned in favour of condemnation. The convict was sentenced to death, and in the dread pronouncement of the penalty, he appeared almost stupefied. At the end he remained at the bar with his eyes closed, still apparently in the attitude of listening, until the gaoler laid hold of his arm and led him down the steps to the interior of the prison.

In the ensuing days the convict put on the air of dementia which was attributed to him at the trial, and he assumed a sullen reserve and mental weakness. Upon being reproved by the superior officials for the extreme criminality of adding such daring hypocrisy to his other heinous offences, he confessed that his comportment was entirely simulated.

"Now the farce is over," he exclaimed, "let me have something to eat and drink." And from this point he gave himself heart and soul to the admonitions of his spiritual advisers, and, from a sanguinary mortal, a schemer, and a sham, he switched on instantaneously a profound piety, which, to some extent, inspired the commiseration of his keepers.

On the morning of execution there was the usual motley crowd outside the walls of the prison, whilst the customary preparations were being made. The mournful procession wended its way through the several yards and apartments leading from the condemned cell to the drop, Blakesley, by some remarkable process of metamorphosis, had become a totally self-possessed man, and this sustaining power never forsook him for a single moment. He ascended the stairs leading to the drop with a firm, unerring step, and proceeded to the scaffold unfalteringly, although the yelling and shouting, both before and after the moment of his appearance, might have been enough to make the firmest heart quail with fear. The executioner adjusted the rope, and the bolt was drawn, amid the continued shrieks of the women and the yelling of men. In the hiatus between the first wrench of the hempen fabric and loss of sensation, the sufferings of the culprit must have been terrible in the extreme. For several seconds the rope swayed violently, and the alarm displayed by the officials at the unwonted energy shown by the accessories of the apparatus of death, was very apparent, as though the hidden body beneath their feet had, by some supernatural agency, secured the mastery. Reassurance came quickly, however, when the rope steadied into an equilibrium, and the strangled wretch was found, an hour afterward, to have been turned off successfully. His cold and inanimate body was placed on a stretcher and conveyed to the cell, whence but a short time previously the living body had emerged. It was placed upon a slab, and the cap was removed from the face, which presented a placid and composed appearance, and no one would for a moment have imagined from the expression of the countenance that the body had met with a violent death. His tenantless clay was deposited in that sepulchre provided for the slayers of men, whose only epitaph was the unqualified initial letter, of which many were to be found before the demolition of Newgate, the solemn remnant of personalities long since crumbled into dust.

There was a very distressing sequel to this sensational case. Mrs. Blakesley, who had suffered severely by the brutal violence of her husband, frequently bemoaned the fate of her brother-in-law, and it was impossible to assuage her grief and self-abasement as the cause, as she would have it, of his death. Lingering for only a few days after the execution, brought down by the shock and intense grief, the poor young woman passed away, bemourned by many who naturally exonerated her and evinced every sympathy for her in her sad condition.

A JUDGE, on passing sentence of death upon an Irishman, said, as usual, "I have nothing now to do but to pass the dreadful sentence of the law upon you." "Oh, don't trouble yourself on my account!" interrupted Pat. "I must do my duty," resumed the judge. "You must go from here to the place of execution, where you are to be hanged by your neck till you are dead, and the Lord have mercy on your soul!" "I am much obliged to you," said the prisoner; "but I never heard o' anyone thriving after your prayers."

A STUDENT of the Middle Temple, being just called to the Bar, sent to a perruquier to measure him for a tie-wig. On applying his apparatus in one direction, the perruquier was seen to smile, upon which the young barrister, desiring to know what ludicrous circumstance gave rise to his mirth, the barber replied that he could not but remark the extreme length of the barrister's head. "That's well," said the student. "We lawyers have occasion for long heads." The barber, who had by this time completed the dimensions, now burst out into a fit of laughter; and, an explanation being insisted on, at last declared that he could not possibly contain himself when he discovered that the barrister's head was just as thick as it was long!

ON one occasion, when the grand jury entered the court-room at Chelmsford, the judge, with considerable solemnity, called their attention to a subject demanding their serious notice. The Grand Jury stood up with considerable anxiety, and the learned judge proceeded, "Gentlemen, the desk at which I write"—pointing—"is full two inches short, a circumstance which I unfeignedly assure you is provocative of much inconvenience to me; for every time I raise my hand to take a dip of ink and return with my pen to my notebook, the sleeve of my robe is caught by this corner, which thus causes a most vexatious interruption to the progress of my duty, and is exceedingly harassing. Gentlemen of the Grand Jury, I trust you will turn your attention to this subject, and that by the next Assizes the evil will be remedied."

"Man is an apprentice; pain is his master; and none knows himself so long as he has not suffered."—A. DE MUSSET.

CHAPTER III.

PICTURE a scene in the Old Bailey to-day. A man is placed in the dock charged with—well, anything from picking a pocket to murder.

The court is open to the public, and the accused, looking round, if he be a life-long criminal, will see some of his pals—probably his accomplices in the offence for which he is arraigned—looking on from the public gallery. If, on the other hand the person about to be tried is of high degree, he will in all likelihood see a few of his friends accommodated with reserved seats in the well of the court.

The judge takes his seat on the bench. So far as the guilt or innocence of the accused is concerned, his lordship has very little to say. He is there to direct the jury on points of law and to give effect to their finding by setting the subject of the investigation free if found innocent or sending him to prison, or, perhaps, death, if the verdict is "guilty." He sits and watches the progress of the case, holding the scales of justice evenly balanced.

A bewigged and begowned gentleman rises in the well of the court, and, indicating several colleagues, announces that he with his learned friends appear for the Crown. They are all in the front rank of the legal profession, and the prisoner, instead of being overawed, smiles as he looks towards that part of the court where sits an equal number of just as eminent King's Counsellors, who are going to do battle on his behalf.

By this time the droning voice of the clerk of the court has informed the person in the dock that the jury are about to be empanelled, and that he may object to any of the men called until twelve "good men and true" are found who will give the case a fair hearing.

Everything is in the prisoner's favour. A battalion of pressmen watch the case from the reporters' box, hundreds of newspapers are ready to denounce the judge if the man is not given a just trial, and if he goes to the gaol or the gallows it is because there is not a shadow of doubt as to his guilt.

Having conjured up this scene, imagine one other, and compare the two. The second is a trial by the Vehmgericht, the infamous secret tribunals of olden times.

It was no rare thing for an innocent person to be brought before the judges, who rigidly obeyed the mandates of the ruffianly scoundrels who directed the court and its doings. People were taken there because it was necessary for somebody's convenience, pleasure, profit, or revenge that they should be found guilty. There were no public present at the trial, no friends, no reporters, no jury, and no fair-minded, honest gentleman in a simple wig and an ermine gown to see that justice was not led astray.

Instead, the terror-stricken, unhappy wretch of a prisoner was dragged before a judge, who sat with his face and head encased in an impenetrable mask and cap, and his figure shrouded by a cloak which effectually concealed it.

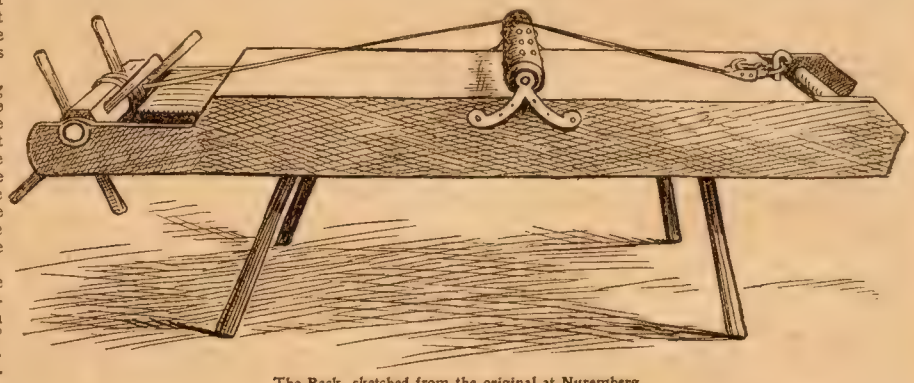
We give an illustration of one of the masks, which is furnished with five breathing holes. It was impossible for the accused to tell who was trying him, but he had no monopoly of ignorance, for, in their desperate anxiety that none should escape their vengeance, it was contrived that the judge should not be able to see the person before him. Law juries in England are sworn to administer the statutes "without fear or favour, affection, or ill-will," but those of the Vehmgericht were held in the inexorable grip of the dread tribunal, and such was the awe-inspiring oath that they were compelled to take, and the terrible consequences which would ensue if they broke it or revealed their identity, that, however iniquitous or however fiendish the instructions they received, they were compelled to carry them out. None could gainsay the Vehmgericht.

Fair trials were unheard of, and as the Vehmgericht took care only to appoint men who would fulfil their instructions to the very letter, few persons, whether innocent or guilty, escaped unmaimed from its clutches.

The rack never ceased to creak in the torture-shed of this infamous tribunal; the thumbscrews were always wet with the blood of maimed prisoners; the whips, which we have described in a previous article, seldom hung idle on the walls; and the brazier was always kept at white heat, so that there should be no delay in inflicting the agony of melted lead and red-hot iron to which the accused were frequently condemned.

The rack, which is pictured in one of our illustrations this week, could, if it were able to speak, tell a fearsome story of the scores—we may say hundreds—of human beings who, having been strapped to it in all the pride of healthy manhood, have left it hopeless and horribly distorted cripples.

It is constructed of wood, and just over ten feet long, the windlass arrangement shown at one end being exceptionally powerful. The victim was laid, naked and face downwards, on the bed of the rack, his arms were securely bound at the wrists to the bar at one end, whilst his legs at the ankles were equally well fastened to the roller at the other. The limbs were spread apart as far as possible, and when the executioner had satisfied himself that the machine would have full play, he and an assistant took their stand at the handles, and the torture began. Creak, creak, creak, went the roller as it turned cumbrously in its sockets, and for a few moments that would be the only sound. Then, as the unfortunate sufferer felt the first effects of the stretching process, a suppressed groan would break from him. Creak! Another turn, and this time a shriek from the poor soul whose muscles were cracking under the strain. Slowly now goes the roller, for, besides having to exert their strength, the executioners know that the slightest forward movement means an increase in the tortured one's agony. Close by stands an official, whose signal to stop the torture is speedily obeyed. A few questions to the man on the machine, which bring forth a refusal, and again at his command the handles move round, the grinding noise of the spindles in their sockets being drowned by the anguished cries of the sufferer, whose every joint was by this time dislocated. And so on until the Vehmgericht had exacted its awful vengeance.



The Rack, sketched from the original at Nuremberg.

It will be noticed that, in the centre of the rack in the picture, is a second roller, studded with pieces of iron. This is one variety of the "spiked hare," a fiendish contrivance which intensified a hundredfold the agonies of the rack. Sometimes this "hare" was covered with sharp spikes instead of the blunt iron, whilst others were corrugated, the edges being exceedingly sharp.

This horrible implement was brought into use as soon as the person on the rack was stretched out, and before he had felt the excruciating pain which a further twist of the windlass would have given him. The "hare" was rolled over his body, every spike which touched him piercing the flesh to the depth of an inch or more. At other times the victim was rolled over the spikes, whilst, when the torture was intended to almost kill the luckless wretch, it was placed between his abdomen and the bed of the rack. Every movement drove the nails deeper into his writhing body, and often ere "Justice" was done the disembowelled and mutilated remains of a human being alone remained.

Looking at this rack, one shudders to think of its ghastly story, of the hellish callousness of the men who turned the handles, and of the people who cried in vain to them for mercy.

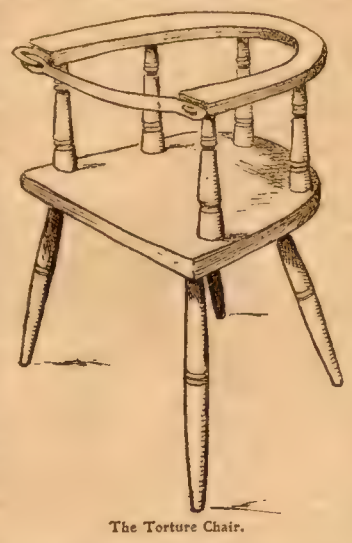
The rack was known to the Romans in Cicero's time, and in the first and second centuries, A.D., it was continually applied to the early Christians, who suffered untold agonies for their faith. Some of the early instruments had a windlass at each end, but the later ones had only the single roller. The machine was first introduced into England in 1447 by the Duke of Exeter, who was at that time Constable of the Tower of London. Thus it became known as the "Duke of Exeter's daughter," and it may safely be said that no one craved for an introduction to that particular member of his grace's family. It seldom, however, stood idle, and particularly was this the case in the days of Queen Elizabeth—"good Queen Bess"—whose admirers caused many deformed specimens of humanity to appear in the streets of the Metropolis, and in distorted figures proclaim the terrors of the rack.

The Mask.

Guy Fawkes, whose public-spirited attempt to infuse a little movement into the doings of the House of Commons, was induced to tell of the gunpowder plot by having his limbs stretched to the point of dislocation. How torture was looked upon in those days may be gathered from the letter which King James sent to the officials instructed to examine the conspirators. It read as follows:

"If he will not otherwise confess, the gentlest tortures are to be first used to him, and so on step by step to the most severe, and so God speed the good work."

Guy steadfastly refused to confess, and Sir William Waad, the Lieutenant of the Tower, in advising him to do so, said he would never give him over until he had "gotten the inward secrets of his thoughts and all his complices." Sir William was as good as his word, and before he told what was required of him, Fawkes suffered frightful tortures on the rack, which pulled him out until his limbs commenced to crack, and made acquaintance with "the scavenger's daughter" (more properly "Skeffington's daughter," named after a Lieutenant of the Tower, who invented it), which squeezed him up into a ball. So terribly did Guy Fawkes suffer that, when he came to sign his confession, the pen dropped from his nerveless fingers after he had written the word "Guido."



The Torture Chair.

Another famous English criminal who was racked until he confessed was Felton, the murderer of the celebrated Duke of Buckingham.

Our third illustration, a chair, does not convey the idea of cruelty, but for all its innocent appearance this bit of furniture has a fearful history. It was used when the more "refined" tortures were being resorted to. Fastened into the chair by the iron bars connecting the two arms, his hands bound behind his back to the rear of the chair, his feet strapped to the legs, and his head pulled down and tied to his hands, a prisoner was absolutely helpless and immovable. In this condition the old Roman torture known as "tormento de toca" was inflicted upon him. His mouth was forced open and a gauze bag placed therein. Then water was poured into the bag very, very slowly, and bit by bit the bag was pressed by the weight of the fluid down the sufferer's throat and eventually into his stomach.

When the branding irons were ordered, the chair was also used, whilst it was also one of the implements necessary when it was decided to drive a victim mad by steadily and constantly dropping water on to a particular spot in his forehead, the palm of his hand, his eyelid, the top of his head, or elsewhere as the ingenuity of the executioner suggested.

The first drop of water would scarcely be felt, but when the drops ran into hundreds and thousands, and the sufferer had long ceased to count them, the fluid crystals would be banging at his brain with the force of a steam-hammer, the awful monotony of the never ending, inexorable shower would have deprived him of reason, and in a few hours the occupant of the chair would be a gibbering idiot, whose ear-splitting yells and eerie laughter would ring through the gaol, causing terror to clutch at the hearts of his fellow prisoners, who were probably on the verge of as terrible a fate.

Next week we will deal with the Terrible Thumbscrew, the Fearful Foot-Screw, and the Iniquitous Torture of the Boot.

WHAT IS TRAGEDY?

MODERN conceptions of the meanings of arbitrary terms are far different from those which obtained when the philology of the English tongue received greater attention than at the present time. It is true that by the process of evolution many changes have been made in the structure and formation of the language which we speak, and the same principle applies to all other languages which become more or less subservient to the caprices, eccentricities, and forms and idiosyncracies of successive generations.

By the same process the term "tragedy," as such has come to be regarded as a circumstance associated with the acts of murderers per se, who either for the gratification of a morbid taste for revenge, or for the more baneful purpose of pelf, have adopted various plans for the laying low of the victims of their fell designs. This is, in reality, the common acceptation of the term tragedy at the present time, in its association with the overt acts to which reference has been made. Tragedy, however, is capable of a far more elastic meaning, and, according to the view of authorities whose pronouncements are worthy of respect, the term is generally applicable to any "distressful, calamitous, or mournful story—a tale or story or event of woe, misery, or wretchedness."

This was the acceptation of the term favoured by Chaucer, as clearly emphasised in the following quotation:

"Tragedie is to sayn a certain storie,
As olde bookes maken us memorie,
Of him that stood in great prosperitee
And is yfallen out of high degree
In to miserie, and endeth wretchedly."

And, if it were necessary to come down to more recent authorities, who were responsible for English as she should be "spik," we have rare Ben Jonson on the subject:

"Thespis is said to be the first found out
The tragedy, and carried it about,
Till then unknown, in carts, wherein did ride
Those that did sing, and act: their faces dy'd
With lees of wine."

Even the term is compounded with the comic element, for we find in Fuller's "Worthies" this description as to an extraordinary human: "His tragi-comical life had a peaceable end in plenty and prosperity." Whilst another eminent authority, pursuing the same subject, discounted the value of the definition of the term in the following conclusive argument:

"The first tragedians found that serious style
Too grave for their uncultivated age,
And so brought wild and naked satyrs in."

To be on good terms with his readers the writer of this series has felt in honour bound to call in the aid of greater authorities than himself in justifying the introduction of other subjects than the "rippers" of anatomy and the devil-incarnate atrocities which have found their completed work.

And, without following a monotonous course of chronological order, the reader will be better entertained with the variety of the subject-matter which will be brought under his notice from time to time. Suffice it that such subjects as are catered under the above heading shall be universally recognised under the category—"Tragedy."

A COUNTRYMAN at Bury Assize was indicted and arraigned for stealing a goose, but the accusation was false, for he brought a neighbour of his, who swore positively that he remembered the very goose in his possession ever since it was a gosling. An Irishman, who was at the same court charged with stealing a gun, hearing this successful defence, prevailed on one of his countrymen to swear that he remembered the gun in his possession ever since it was a pistol!

WHEN Numerius, Governor of the Narbonnoise Gaul, was impeached of plundering his province, he denied the charge, and baffled the accusers, on which a famous lawyer cried out to the Emperor, "Cæsar, who will ever be found guilty if it is sufficient for a man to deny the charge?" To which Julian answered, "But who will appear innocent if a bare accusation is sufficient?"

THOMAS DRORY'S BETRAYAL AND MURDER OF JAEL DENNY.

"A grievous burthen was thy birth to me."
SHAKESPEARE ("Rich. III.").

THOMAS DRORY was a young farmer, of Doddinghurst, in Essex, the son of Martin Drory, also an agriculturist, who took into his employ one Thomas Last, his second wife, and Jael, a girl of some twenty summers, who was step-daughter to the man Last, accompanied her parents.

Father and son, the two farmers, resided under the same roof, and in our present narrative it will be found how the incidents related were facilitated by the fateful meeting of Thomas Drory and Jael Denny.

The former was described as "a mild, inoffensive young man," whilst Jael, although of such humble parentage, is said to have been a young girl of prepossessing appearance, of fine figure, beyond the average stature of her sex, and her general conduct was appraised as circumspect and highly becoming. She eked out an existence by working as a sempstress and stay-maker; but occasionally the demand upon her, in the pursuit of her occupation, was such that she was perforce thrown upon the not unwilling bounty of her parents, and this fact accounted for her presence at home, and, further, for the intercourse which sprang up between herself and her betrayer.

Very early an improper intimacy took place between the young people, which was kept up for about eighteen months, when the young girl was in an advanced stage of pregnancy. It is to be assumed that young Drory's affections had become transplanted into the heart of a certain Miss Gibbing, a fact which was not unknown, and it appears that this young lady had even been offered a proposal of marriage from the fickle young farmer. Not to anticipate the events which were centred in the defection of the bucolic Adonis, we must content ourselves for the nonce with the events which followed.

The deceased one day, after having been absent from home between the hours of four and five in the afternoon, returned and joined her family at the frugal meal, in the progress of which she consulted her watch, and immediately retired from the table, incoherently murmuring something about "an appointment." Her mother regarding this as something very unimportant, prolonged the meal, in the expectation that her daughter would return before the "clearing." But it transpired that the unhappy girl had partaken of her last refreshment.

The hours passed by, and Jael returned not. On the following morning Last was despatched by the anxious mother to make inquiries, whilst she herself sought Thomas Drory, whom she conceived to be the most likely authority as to the

THE LIFELESS FORM OF JAEL DENNY.

missing girl's whereabouts. Having encountered the object of her quest, she, without formality, directly challenged him, "Where is my child?" The reply was total ignorance of her absence. He was roundly accused of falsehood, and the circumstances of the preceding afternoon having been detailed to him, he repudiated everything alleged against him, remarking that he had not seen Jael after five o'clock. After this, he had gone to Brentwood with a basket of eggs for disposal.

Meanwhile, Thomas Last was prosecuting his sad mission. Negotiating a hedge at a spot called Gravel Pit Mead, the anxious investigator had not long to entertain doubt as to the girl's fate, for there, lying face downward on the grass of the dewy meadow, he found the lifeless form of Jael Denny. Her neck was surrounded by several coils of rope, and her nose was flat upon her face, indicating that the head must have been pressed with considerable force. Blood was bubbling from the mouth, eyes, and nose; the face was black and swollen; the tongue was protruding from the mouth, and deeply bitten by the teeth; the elbow of the left arm was much bruised, and some of the skin abraded.

Thus had this fair creature been transformed from a perfect type of beauty into a sickly and hideous distortion—the vital spark extinguished, conveying with it the yet unborn entity, which was responsible for the terrible tragedy.

The sleuth-hounds of the law were quickly in action, and they were prompt to realise the fact that all the circumstances pointed to Thomas Drory as the perpetrator of the crime, and he was at once accused and arrested and brought to the scene of the sanguinary act.

There was the inevitable, preconceived denial of guilt when the accused man, unemotional, stood in full view of the shocking spectacle. On being examined, spots of blood, surrounded by fresh moisture, were discovered on his corduroy breeches, which he promptly accounted for by saying that it was some stuff that he had had to administer to his calves, and that he would show the pot in which he kept the material.

The psychological instincts of Sherlock Holmes were anticipated by the rustic guardian of the peace who investigated this particular pot.

"Now, look 'ee here, mate," said the inspired hero of the blue, "that there pot be kivered wi' cobwebs, and it is a pot that ain't got nary crack on it, nor openin' to it. You will have to go along with me."

"But——" remonstrated Drory.

"'But' isn't in the lawr. You must come along o' me."

"But," reiterated Drory, "you can see——"

"Yes, I can see that there pot ain't a crack in it. You stid that them marks whut looks very much like human (pronounced 'hoo-man') blood, was stuff that you used for the calves; whereas (pronounced in heavy Old English) them calves ain't in it."

The rustic arbiter was inflexible in his arguments, and he summed up the whole situation in as short a space of time as it would take an ordinary judge to bring himself into an equilibrium on taking his seat at the trial.

The "Peeler," in all the majesty of belt and buttons, with all-satisfying visions of stripes, triumphantly pointed to the pot, which proved to be covered with cobwebs, and had evidently not been handled for some time.

"There, there, my good fellow," striking a tremendous attitude and a well-padded breast as he seized the arm of the agitated suspect, "come along o' me! 'Calves' 'on't do at all!"

Such dogmatism as this, however much it may have been tolerated in the fifties, would be met at the present age—thanks to enlightened notions of police investigation—with severe remonstrance; but the incident is not wholly undeserving of mention, as illustrating how, in matters of the most gruesome import, the ludicrous must force itself to the surface.

The prisoner then energetically urged the theory—which was much discussed throughout the successive stages of the case—that Jael Denny had come to her death by her own hands, supporting his point with the allegation that she had frequently threatened to have recourse to such an act if her seducer refused to marry her. As to this, by way of assimilation, we must go back a little.

Some few days previously, Mrs. Last, who had left her daughter in the house alone, suddenly missed Drory from the garden, and upon returning the latter was found under the bed. The daughter appeared flushed and flurried in the living room below. The intruder, on perceiving the mother, coming from his hiding place, exclaimed: "Here, are you going to sign this?" The paper appeared to have just been written by the girl, and read as follows:

September 29, 1850.

This is to prove that this trouble that I am in is not by Thomas Drory, all though i suppose that it has been reported that it is, and therefore i write to supply the mind of those ho may read this note that I wish them to trouble themselves with their own business. JEAL DENNY.

The honest mother resolutely refused to recognise this document, and its object was not apparent at the time, nor did its purport become visible until the murderer had confessed the crime, just before its expiation. From this we gather that, prior to the mother's arrival on the occasion just referred to, a wild scene had been enacted between Drory and his victim, which clearly established his intentions.

He first offered the girl £10 upon her signing the above document as a preliminary to compensating her for his freedom. The latter condition involved a payment of £100, which was increased, upon the girl's refusal, to £200, part of which he would immediately pay down. This she steadily declined, declaring nothing would satisfy her but marriage, and that if she did not have him, no other should, for she would take his life. This threat, so Drory asserted, she repeated on the night of the murder, and also reproached him with not having paid her the £10 he promised her on signing the note exonerating him from the paternity; and then he spoke to the deceased's alternative plan to do away with herself.

The usual magisterial inquiry over, we next meet Thomas Drory arraigned before the higher tribunal at Chelmsford.

Simple and all-convincing as the facts appear to have been, the case was made one of inordinate length, the evidence and the speeches of counsel dragging the business through two entire days. Never was the defence of an accused man given such extreme latitude, the main point being that of suicide! Witness after witness was called forward to give testimony to the fact that the unhappy girl had frequently threatened self-destruction. How many a luckless maid, driven to the very verge of despair through the cowardly defection of the author of her shame, has not sought oblivion under similar circumstances? The plea was unavailing, and Thomas Drory, without inspiring one grain of human sympathy or regret, was condemned to die at the hands of the common hangman.

In the "confession," to which reference has already been made, the condemned convict added contempt to the sentiments already held towards him in his avowal that his unfortunate victim entertained mercenary motives in the drama of their association, and, worse still, he asserted that Jael Denny had instigated him to the murder of Miss Gibbing, first marrying her and acquiring her property, so that she (Jael) should become his second wife, with improved substance. It is scarcely possible, at even this distant date, to command sufficient patience to commit the slander to paper. At the time it was scornfully rejected.

But all was settled outside the walls of Chelmsford County Gaol on the execution morning, not a finger having been raised to assist the murderer—not a voice heard pleading for mitigation on his behalf. A vast multitude congregated to watch the gruesome work of Calcraft, on a cold and inhospitable March morning, as he drew the cap over the haggard head of the culprit, concealing his face from a demonstrative crowd, and shutting out from him the sight of this world for ever. His despatch was quickly supplemented by the hanging of the notorious Mrs. Chesham, the poisoner.

As if to accentuate the enormity of his crime, it is recorded that his struggles were terrible in the extreme, the swaying of the rope lasting for several minutes.

BURNING A WOMAN FOR SORCERY.

A most heinous and disgraceful circumstance occurred at Onkerzeele, near Grammont, in Flanders, on the 14th of November, 1815. A farmer had a daughter who was taken ill; and a poor woman resided near the farmer, who was reputed to be a witch, because she did not much associate with the villagers. The farmer having had two daughters taken ill suddenly, instantly conceived that the poor old woman bewitched them; and together with some of his family, secured her, and burnt her feet, legs, and thighs on a slow fire, and thus kept cruelly tormenting her for three hours. When they had nearly satisfied their cruelty, and conceived her at the point of death, they yielded to her prayers for a priest, and sent for one, by which the poor creature was saved from immediate death; but she did not long survive the dreadful tortures she had undergone.

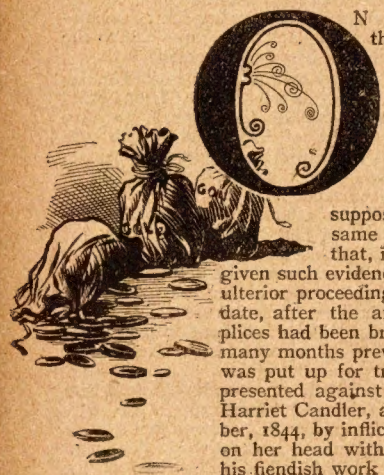
SAMUEL YARHAM

The Yarmouth Shoemaker

Who expiated his crime after turning Informer against his associates.

"Yet thence his lustful orgies he enlarg'd
Even to that hill of scandal, by the grove
Of Moloch, homicide . . . ."
—MILTON.

PART I.



ON Friday, March 27, 1846, there came before the Norwich Assize Court a case which stands to this day, we believe, almost unparalleled in English history, that of a man who had been allowed to give evidence against three supposed accomplices in the same offence, under the belief that, in consequence of having given such evidence, he was free from any ulterior proceedings; but, upon the above date, after the aforesaid alleged accomplices had been brought in "Not guilty" many months previously, Samuel Yarham was put up for trial, on the indictment presented against him for the murder of Harriet Candler, at Yarmouth, in November, 1844, by inflicting divers mortal blows on her head with a hammer, completing his fiendish work by cutting the throat of his victim with a knife.

The unfortunate victim occupied the lower part of a house in Yarmouth, the residue and upper floors of which were tenanted by an attorney, named Catchpole, the prisoner's wife being his servant, and the prisoner allowed, as her husband, to live on the premises, where he carried on his work as a shoemaker. From her penurious habits, Mrs. Candler was generally supposed to be possessed of money, and perhaps the knowledge was shared by Yarham, who, as she sold greengrocery and tobacco, was, as well as his wife, a frequent visitor in her shop. Behind her shop was a parlour, and then a bedroom, which opened on to a yard, divided from the yard of Mr. Catchpole by a low wall, there being a higher outer wall, which formed the line of the adjoining "row" or street. This being the position of the premises and of these people, it seems that Mrs. Candler received a parcel from Norwich not long before her murder, which contained a large sum of money. This fact was known to many persons, and to one friend she stated her intention of paying it over to some gentleman in Beccles. This design she never lived to carry into execution, for the police, on going their rounds at two o'clock, discovered that her street door was open, and behind the counter they found the dead body of the poor old woman, crouched under the place where the till ought to have been. On her head were several fearful wounds, which appeared to have been inflicted by some instrument like a hammer, while her throat was cut in a manner quite sufficient to cause death. Underneath her body was a half-ounce packet of tobacco, which indicated that the murderer had distracted her attention, in all probability, by pretending to buy the article, and had given the first blow while she was in the act of serving him. A further search led to the discovery of a candle on a tub, which appeared to have been "nipped" out by the fingers, and the till, which stood in a corner against the drawers. On the table was the half-finished supper of the deceased, and her bed presented the appearance as if someone nad sat down on the end of it. There being no immediate clue to the murderer, the police made a noise with their truncheons, but without effect; and it was not until the superintendent came, and rang Mr. Catchpole's bell with great violence, that any notice was taken of them by anyone in the house or neighbourhood.

As soon, however, as the bell rung, Yarham put his head out of the window of his bedroom, where his wife was lying sick, leeches having been applied to her head that night, and on inquiring what was the matter, was informed and asked to come down. He then called his master, and they both went downstairs, and learned all the police knew. In answer to several questions put to him by the police and Mr. Catchpole, Yarham, who had sat up for his master, and had let him in at half-past one o'clock, stoutly insisted that he had not heard any noise during the night, though the partition between the passage which separated the shop and the room in which he sat was very thin indeed; so much so, that his wife said she had heard a conversation between her husband and Mrs. Candler on that very night about nine o'clock, when he had gone to buy some rushlights. Though no suspicion alighted at first on any particular individual, yet the observation of all Yarmouth was on the qui vive, and the anxiety of the town was shared by the wife and daughter of an old artilleryman named Dick, who was stationed at one of the batteries on "the Denes," a large, sandy track stretching out to the sea and the mouth of the Yare from the town. It being well known that thieves were in the habit of secreting stolen property in the sand-hills which abound on this plain, the attention of Mrs. and Miss Dick was keenly excited on the day after the murder, as they were going homewards, and they, on their way, noted a hill which had been recently disturbed, and was approached by the footprints of two men. On looking down, Mrs. Dick saw a piece of string sticking up through the sand, and pulling it, she discovered three bags, which, on being examined, were found to contain gold, silver, and copper money to some little extent, and no doubt formed part of "the old woman's money," for one of the bags bore an address to her, and was afterwards identified as one which had recently been despatched to her with canary seed from Norwich. While Mrs. Dick and her daughter were so engaged, Mr. Dick, Mr. Tooley, a miller, and a man named Royal, came up. The latter remarked that there ought to be more money yet, and putting his hand in the hole which had been made, he pulled out a small bag containing some gold and silver, which he essayed to count. He was prevented from doing this by the artilleryman stating that he would carry it all. Later in the afternoon, after the exploring party had delivered their "find" over to the officers at the inquest, Mrs. Dick, who was at the battery, was accosted by a young man who was at the place where the money was discovered. He was poking at the hole. The man said to Mrs. Dick:

"It is cold here, and you need have a good fire."

"I would keep better, if I could afford it," was the woman's reply.

"Your name is Dick?" questioned the unknown man.

"Yes," replied she.

"You found the money?"

"Yes."

"All you have to do now is to find the murderer."

"I wish to God I could," responded Mrs. Dick. "I would walk twenty miles to find it out, though I am lame."

He then said, moving his foot, "I am the murderer."

"If you are the murderer, you would not tell me; what is your name?"

"You know me," he replied.

"I do not."

"Yes, you do."

"If you will tell me, I will tell the gentlemen."

And the stranger again replied, "You know me."

He then walked away, and taking a further glance at the hole, for what object was only too apparent, he proceeded towards the town. Information of this was given by the women to the mayor of the town, who spoke of him as "Some person who was tampering with justice."

Examined before the magistrates as a witness, Mrs. Dick thought she recognised the man whom she had seen among others who had been placed in the dock, but she could not be certain, and could not very well recollect who it was. After the magisterial trial, the woman (Mrs. Dick) and her husband went home by train, when they saw Yarham and his wife. He tried to shake hands with Dick, but the latter refused.

"Good God!" said she, "if that be Yarham, that is the man that spoke to me."

Curiously enough, Yarham's wife asked Mrs. Dick if she thought the people in Yarmouth would think she was the guilty party if they stopped at Yarmouth.

"God knows!" was the reply. "You know your conscience best."

When Yarham first came up to the railway station, he said to Dick, "Don't you know me? I am Yarham; but call me Mr. C.," and after proceeding some little way on the journey, he remarked to Mrs. Dick:

"Say as little about the money as possible, for my solicitor told me that the prisoner's—(i.e., the one then charged before the magistrates)—solicitor wanted to fetch me in the murder, and you as the person that helped me to hide it."

"Dick," said the astonished woman, "do you hear what Yarham says?" And the husband coming up, the designing villain repeated the statement. On arriving at Yarmouth, the man said:

"Dick, if I see anything in the papers that would affect you or your wife's character, I will let you know."

seen the three men come from the shop on the night in question, and that Royal had, in the presence of the two others, admitted to him that he had killed the old woman. After this, he added that he went into the shop, saw the body, and then repaired to his own home, where, after he had admitted his master, he retired to bed. The effect produced on the public and in the Court by this statement was by no means so unfavourable to the prisoners then on their trial as it was to the witness himself. The former called several witnesses, who proved alibis for them, and they were acquitted.

Yarham, of course, was discharged with the others; but his reception by the crowd was far different, and no pilloried biped ever came in for such an unpleasant experience, short of death itself, than the perjured reptile who is the subject of our story. He was met on the neighbouring hill

HE WAS PURSUED TO A PUBLIC-HOUSE.

To which the retort was, "Don't come to me; I don't want you. I take in the paper myself."

These dialogues are purposely introduced to show the devilish subtlety with which Yarham sought to inculpate other people in the acts of which he, as it was proved, was the sole perpetrator.

The circumstances arising from the incidents to which we have already dealt with were deemed sufficient to warrant the arrest of Yarham and the man Royal, together with two others, named Mapes and Hall. These parties were all subsequently brought before the Mayor of Yarmouth, on the charge of murder, and the Dicks were most prominent witnesses, their testimony going to identify the footprints on the sands with those of two of them. Eventually the four men were all committed for trial, and just before the Spring Assizes for 1845 it was announced that Yarham had made a statement which implicated the other three men, and that he would be allowed to give evidence against them. This he accordingly did, denying all participation in the offence, and stating in substance that he had by accident

by the taunts and hootings of an infuriated populace. He was spat upon and pelted and execrated with all the energy of a people who had rightly judged the merits of the case. He was pursued to a public-house, and was so beset that, to save him from being torn to pieces, he was smuggled away. He crossed the river secretly at night near the railroad station, whence on the following day he returned to Yarmouth with the Dicks and some other witnesses. His reception at home was not more free from public odium than at Norwich. The police were frequently called out to protect him, and he at last applied to the Poor Law Guardians for funds to facilitate his departure from a scene so oppressive. This aid he applied for on the 18th, the trial having terminated on the 9th, and on the 22nd he received £3, with which he departed, evidently to the relief of the authorities of a town anxious, as it would seem, on any account to see the last of a man who had far from received "the good report of all men."

TO BE CONCLUDED.

Criminal Problems

WHY IS OUR PENAL SYSTEM DEFECTIVE?

THE very conception of our modern method of dealing with our criminal classes is wrong. That is a broad statement, but it is one which is amply upheld by all who have really studied the matter, not from the point of view of the paid official, but from the broader standpoint of the Imperialist, of the humanitarian. Where a system depends on the application of deterrents, it is trusting to a broken reed.

Take the evidence of a man of the highest culture, who, unfortunately, and undoubtedly owing to no intentional fault of his own, was sentenced to a long term of penal servitude. Before the Prison Commissioners he said: "Society is injured by taking legal notice of any offence which is not visited with transportation. The effect of a short imprisonment is, so far as concerns the deterring of the offender and his associates, as transitory as the punishment; the prisoner is a degraded man, a member of the criminal class, who alone will countenance him, and with whom he must stay, willy nilly."

In this there is much solid wisdom. The deplorable effect of the first term of incarceration is manifested throughout the whole of a man's life, and the individual is strong indeed who is able to fight his way against the world afresh, and not sink into the ranks of the habitual convicts. Only a week or two ago, a prosperous merchant, and a Municipal Councillor for one of our largest towns, died, leaving behind him a record of the terrible struggles which he had to save himself from reverting to the companionship of those whom he had met in prison, where he had been confined, when a youth, for some paltry offence. The whole of the man's life was blighted, and but for the good counsel given him by the prison chaplain he would undoubtedly have been almost compelled to join the ranks of the very people whom he most wished to avoid. As it was, throughout the long and useful career which succeeded his imprisonment he felt that the shadow of the gaol was on him and the dread of exposure continually with him. As he pathetically said, "It would have been a relief to have become a real criminal." There is one of the effects of our deterrent system; we compel our erring brothers to feel that it would be "a relief to become a real criminal"! Where is the prevention from wrong-doing in our code if we plunge the malefactor into a vortex from which even a man of the strongest will and culture could barely escape?

But perhaps it may be contended that this is only the opinion of a man who suffered for a fault. Listen to what Mr. George Laval Chesterton, for many years the celebrated governor of Coldbath Fields Prison, says on the same subject: "I have often had occasion to remark how rare it is to find any person who has had experience of criminals to attach weight to deterrents."

And again, Mr. Hill, for years the Recorder of Birmingham, in charging one of his grand juries, remarked: "But, gentlemen, the longer I sit on this Bench, the humbler grows my opinion of the efficiency of criminal jurisprudence, especially as regards its deterrent operation, either on the offender himself, who is visited with the penalties of the law, or on those exposed to temptation, but who have not yet found their way into the dock."

The first great fault, then, is that our present system is supposed to be deterrent, and that, far from hindering the discharged convict from contemplating further crime, it places a distinct inducement in his way to do so. But it goes further than this. Though not intended to be so, our penal code is, to a certain extent, vindictive; it is a war of the community against the individual, rather than an attempt to reform the individual for the ultimate benefit of himself and the community.

Again, look at these figures: official records give us the startling fact that fifty per cent. of prisoners discharged from gaol are re-convicted within an average of six years from their liberation. During those six years a certain number of ex-convicts must have died, and, taking the death-rate among prisoners at the average given, as fifteen per thousand per annum, no less than ten per cent. have expired in the time, of whom one-half would most certainly have re-entered the prison. Looking at the matter, then, in its most favourable aspect, our present mode of dealing with criminals can only reform forty per cent., which is little to boast of, while the actual number of those reclaimed is probably not much more than fifteen per cent.

There is one bright spot in our criminal jurisprudence, and that is the existence of reformatories, which certainly have had a great influence in the reduction of crime.

LEAVES FROM OUR NOTEBOOK

UNTIL the introduction of the Police Act of Sir Robert Peel it was customary to reward the informer against any culprit convicted of felony with the sum of forty pounds, the object of this rule being to make it worth the while of every citizen, as well as of the Bow Street runners and watchmen, to immediately secure the arrest of suspected persons. At first the system of remuneration worked very well, and the authorities looked at the registers of the convicted and awaited the day when their brilliant plan should have purged the kingdom of all crimes. Then one gentleman, more acute than the rest, noticed that, whereas there were many convictions for felony, there were very few charged with minor offences. A fresh committee was appointed to inquire into this phenomenon, when it was discovered that the rewards were really promoting crime.

THE "runners" and watchmen would purposely lay traps for the criminally inclined to get them to commit a slight offence. Believing that they had not been detected in their first fall, they gradually got bolder, suitable temptations being laid in their way by the police, who kept careful guard over them. At last a felony was committed, and the offender promptly haled before the magistrates. The money went into the constable's pocket. In the police jargon of the day the expression, "He does not weigh forty pounds," was used with reference to a criminal who was being nursed till he had committed a felony. This shocking state of affairs was remedied at the end of the eighteenth century.

THE motives given for committing murders are often of the flimsiest kind, but that which led Henry Plunket to cut the throat of Thomas Brown is probably the slightest reason which has ever led a man to perpetrate such an awful crime. Plunket was a man of very good family, and had served with credit as an officer in the French army, in the same regiment as his father. Getting tired of military life, the young officer came over to England to visit the country, and while in London lodged in a house kept by Brown. The latter was a perruquier, and Plunket fell in love with a particularly fine wig and ordered his landlord to make him one like it. Brown did so and charged seven guineas for the article. The price seemed exorbitant to the officer, and he suggested that four pounds would be sufficient to pay. Brown refused this, remarking that the time and materials were worth more than that, without leaving any profit. This seems to have angered Plunket, who forthwith took up a razor and nearly severed the shopman's head from his body. Little time was taken in searching and finding the culprit, who paid the penalty for his wickedness in September, 1714. After his execution it was alleged that he had once killed a beggar in France simply because he dared to ask alms from a soldier. The truth of the statement was never definitely determined.

Answers to Correspondents

The Editor will be pleased to answer any suitable questions.

H. A. W.—Will deal with this later.

CANTANKEROUS.—Impossible to please everybody.

Q.H.R.T.—The Tolbooth was the scene of many executions.

INTERESTED.—"Screws" mean skeleton keys in thieves' language.

PARSON.—Mr. Horsley was the last chaplain of the old Clerkenwell prison. He is an acknowledged expert on criminology.

A.L.F.—You can commit a crime if you are above the age of reason. A boy of fifteen has been hanged at Newgate (1820).

T.M.D.—The last public execution was on May 26th, 1868. The first private one took place at Newgate on September 26th of the same year.

F. C. G.—Margaret Diblanc was not executed; her sentence was commuted by Mr. Home Secretary Bruce to penal servitude for life, June, 1872.

STUDENT.—Most of the matter in the book you refer to is an absolute reprint from No. 1 of the Newgate Calendar by Wilkinson, published in 1817, and now hard to get.

ANXIOUS.—A line to the Prison Authorities, and to the Chaplain of the gaol, would probably give you the information you seek, but your intentions must be strictly honourable.

LEGAL.—The Act abolishing public executions in this country came into effect in 1868. It does not, however, affect persons condemned to death for High Treason, who would probably have to be hanged in public.

ENQUIRER.—The man you refer to is probably William Duell, who was executed at Tyburn for murder in 1740. He is said to have revived when the surgeons commenced to dissect him. The evidence of this, however, should be accepted with caution.

J. F. B.—The "Record" you refer to is hopelessly inaccurate, and should not be used for settling disputes. Mrs. Dyer was hanged at Newgate in June, 96. The Muswell Hill murderers were despatched on the previous day in company with a man named Seaman.

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